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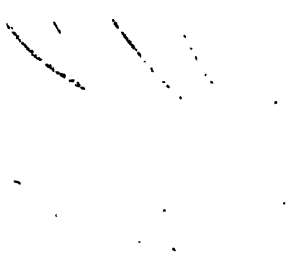

NARO

MISCELLANIES OF LITERATURE,

BY

I. D'ISRAELI, ESQ.

D. C. L. F. S. A.

A New Edition.

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PAGE

SPECIMENS OF HIS HUMOUR AND OBSERVATIONS ON HUMAN LIFE . . . 336

SOME EVIDENCES OF HIS SAGACITY IN THE DISCOVERY OF TRUTH 337

OF HIS BASILICON DORON 339

OF HIS IDEA OF A TYRANT AND A KING . . . . . *ib.*

ADVICE TO PRINCE HENRY IN THE CHOICE OF HIS SERVANTS AND ASSOCIATES . 340

DESCRIBES THE REVOLUTIONISTS OF HIS TIME . . . . . *ib.*

OF THE NOBILITY OF SCOTLAND . . . . . *ib.*

OF COLONISING 341

OF MERCHANTS . . . . . *ib.*

REGULATIONS FOR THE PRINCE'S MANNERS AND HABITS . . . . . *ib.*

OF HIS IDEA OF THE ROYAL PREROGATIVE 342

THE LAWYERS' IDEA OF THE SAME . . . . . *ib.*

OF HIS ELEVATED CONCEPTION OF THE KINGLY CHARACTER 344

HIS DESIGN IN ISSUING "THE BOOK OF SPORTS" FOR THE SABBATH DAY . . 345

THE SABBATARIAN CONTROVERSY 346

THE MOTIVES OF HIS AVERSION TO WAR 347

JAMES ACKNOWLEDGES HIS DEPENDENCE ON THE COMMONS; THEIR CONDUCT . *ib.*

OF CERTAIN SCANDALOUS CHRONICLES 349

A PICTURE OF THE AGE FROM A MANUSCRIPT OF THE TIMES 350

ANECDOTES OF THE MANNERS OF THE AGE 352

JAMES I. DISCOVERS THE DISORDERS AND DISCONTENTS OF A PEACE OF MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS 356

THE KING'S PRIVATE LIFE IN HIS OCCASIONAL RETIREMENTS 357

A DETECTION OF THE DISCREPANCIES OF OPINION AMONG THE DECRIERS OF JAMES I. *ib.*

SUMMARY OF HIS CHARACTER 359

LITERARY CHARACTER.

PAGE

DEDICATION 362

PREFACE 363

CHAPTER I.

OF LITERARY CHARACTERS, AND OF THE LOVERS OF LITERATURE AND ART . . 367

CHAPTER II.

OF THE ADVERSARIES OF LITERARY MEN AMONG THEMSELVES.—MATTER-OF-FACT MEN, AND MEN OF WIT.—THE POLITICAL ECONOMISTS.—OF THOSE WHO ABANDON THEIR STUDIES.—MEN IN OFFICE.—THE ARBITERS OF PUBLIC OPINION.—THOSE WHO TREAT THE PURSUITS OF LITERATURE WITH LEVITY 368

CHAPTER III.

OF ARTISTS, IN THE HISTORY OF MEN OF LITERARY GENIUS.—THEIR HABITS AND PURSUITS ANALOGOUS.—THE NATURE OF THEIR GENIUS IS SIMILAR IN THEIR DISTINCT WORKS.—SHOWN BY THEIR PARALLEL ÆRAS, AND BY A COMMON END PURSUED BY BOTH 371

CHAPTER IV.

OF NATURAL GENIUS.—MINDS CONSTITUTIONALLY DIFFERENT CANNOT HAVE AN EQUAL APTITUDE.—GENIUS NOT THE RESULT OF HABIT AND EDUCATION.—ORIGINATES IN PECULIAR QUALITIES OF THE MIND.—THE PREDISPOSITION OF GENIUS.—A SUBSTITUTION FOR THE WHITE PAPER OF LOCKE 372

CHAPTER V.

YOUTH OF GENIUS.—ITS FIRST IMPULSES MAY BE ILLUSTRATED BY ITS SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS.—PARENTS HAVE ANOTHER ASSOCIATION OF THE MAN OF GENIUS THAN WE.—OF GENIUS, ITS FIRST HABITS.—ITS MELANCHOLY.—ITS REVERIES.—ITS LOVE OF SOLITUDE.—ITS DISPOSITION TO REPOSE.—OF A YOUTH DISTINGUISHED BY HIS EQUALS.—FEEBLENESS OF ITS FIRST ATTEMPTS.—OF GENIUS NOT DISCOVERABLE EVEN IN MANHOOD.—THE EDUCATION OF THE YOUTH MAY NOT BE THAT OF HIS GENIUS.—AN UNSETTLED IMPULSE, QUERULOUS TILL IT FINDS ITS TRUE

PAGE

OCCUPATION.—WITH SOME, CURIOSITY AS INTENSE A FACULTY AS INVENTION.—WHAT THE YOUTH FIRST APPLIES TO IS COMMONLY HIS DELIGHT AFTERWARDS.—FACTS OF THE DECISIVE CHARACTER OF GENIUS 376

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST STUDIES.—THE SELF-EDUCATED ARE MARKED BY STUBBORN PECULIARITIES.—THEIR ERRORS.—THEIR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE NEGLECT OR CONTEMPT THEY INCUR.—THE HISTORY OF SELF-EDUCATION IN MOSES MENDELSSOHN.—FRIENDS USUALLY PREJUDICIAL IN THE YOUTH OF GENIUS.—A REMARKABLE INTERVIEW BETWEEN PETRARCH IN HIS FIRST STUDIES, AND HIS LITERARY ADVISER.—EXHORTATION 386

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE IRRITABILITY OF GENIUS.—GENIUS IN SOCIETY OFTEN IN A STATE OF SUFFERING.—EQUALITY OF TEMPER MORE PREVALENT AMONG MEN OF LETTERS.—OF THE OCCUPATION OF MAKING A GREAT NAME.—ANXIETIES OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL.—OF THE INVENTORS.—WRITERS OF LEARNING.—WRITERS OF TASTE.—ARTISTS 393

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SPIRIT OF LITERATURE AND THE SPIRIT OF SOCIETY.—THE INVENTORS.—SOCIETY OFFERS SEDUCTION AND NOT REWARD TO MEN OF GENIUS.—THE NOTIONS OF PERSONS OF FASHION OF MEN OF GENIUS.—THE HABITUDES OF THE MAN OF GENIUS DISTINCT FROM THOSE OF THE MAN OF SOCIETY.—STUDY, MEDITATION, AND ENTHUSIASM, THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.—THE DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MEN OF THE WORLD AND THE LITERARY CHARACTER 401

CHAPTER IX.

CONVERSATIONS OF MEN OF GENIUS.—THEIR DEFICIENT AGREEABLENESS MAY RESULT FROM QUALITIES WHICH CONDUCE TO THEIR GREATNESS.—SLOW-MINDED MEN NOT THE DULLEST.—THE CONVERSATIONISTS NOT THE ABLEST WRITERS.—THEIR TRUE EXCELLENCE IN CONVERSATION CONSISTS OF ASSOCIATIONS WITH THEIR PURSUITS 406

CHAPTER X.

LITERARY SOLITUDE.—ITS NECESSITY.—ITS PLEASURES.—OF VISITORS BY PROFESSION.—ITS INCONVENIENCES 410

CHAPTER XI.

PAGE

THE MEDITATIONS OF GENIUS.—A WORK ON THE ART OF MEDITATION NOT YET PRODUCED.—PREDISPOSING THE MIND.—IMAGINATION AWAKENS IMAGINATION.—GENERATING FEELINGS BY MUSIC.—SLIGHT HABITS.—DARKNESS AND SILENCE, BY SUSPENDING THE EXERCISE OF OUR SENSES, INCREASE THE VIVACITY OF OUR CONCEPTIONS.—THE ARTS OF MEMORY.—MEMORY THE FOUNDATION OF GENIUS. INVENTIONS BY SEVERAL TO PRESERVE THEIR OWN MORAL AND LITERARY CHARACTER—AND TO ASSIST THEIR STUDIES.—THE MEDITATIONS OF GENIUS DEPEND ON HABIT.—OF THE NIGHT-TIME.—A DAY OF MEDITATION SHOULD PRECEDE A DAY OF COMPOSITION.—WORKS OF MAGNITUDE FROM SLIGHT CONCEPTIONS.—OF THOUGHTS NEVER WRITTEN.—THE ART OF MEDITATION EXERCISED AT ALL HOURS AND PLACES.—CONTINUITY OF ATTENTION THE SOURCE OF PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOVERIES.—STILLNESS OF MEDITATION THE FIRST STATE OF EXISTENCE IN GENIUS 413

CHAPTER XII.

THE ENTHUSIASM OF GENIUS.—A STATE OF MIND RESEMBLING A WAKING DREAM DISTINCT FROM REVERIE.—THE IDEAL PRESENCE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE REAL PRESENCE.—THE SENSES ARE REALLY AFFECTED IN THE IDEAL WORLD, PROVED BY A VARIETY OF INSTANCES.—OF THE RAPTURE OR SENSATION OF DEEP STUDY IN ART, SCIENCE, AND LITERATURE.—OF PERTURBED FEELINGS, IN DELIRIUM—IN EXTREME ENDURANCE OF ATTENTION—AND IN VISIONARY ILLUSIONS.—ENTHUSIASTS IN LITERATURE AND ART—OF THEIR SELF-IMMOLATIONS 422

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE JEALOUSY OF GENIUS—JEALOUSY OFTEN PROPORTIONED TO THE DEGREE OF GENIUS.—A PERPETUAL FEVER AMONG AUTHORS AND ARTISTS.—INSTANCES OF ITS INCREDIBLE EXCESS, AMONG BROTHERS AND BENEFACTORS.—OF A PECULIAR SPECIES, WHERE THE FEVER CONSUMES THE SUFFERER, WITHOUT ITS MALIGNANCY 430

CHAPTER XIV.

WANT OF MUTUAL ESTEEM, AMONG MEN OF GENIUS, OFTEN ORIGINATES IN A DEFICIENCY OF ANALOGOUS IDEAS.—IT IS NOT ALWAYS ENVY OR JEALOUSY WHICH INDUCES MEN OF GENIUS TO UNDERVALUE EACH OTHER 432

CHAPTER XV.

PAGE

SELF-PRAISE OF GENIUS.—THE LOVE OF PRAISE INSTINCTIVE IN THE NATURE OF GENIUS.—A HIGH OPINION OF THEMSELVES NECESSARY FOR THEIR GREAT DESIGNS.—THE ANCIENTS OPENLY CLAIMED THEIR OWN PRAISE.—AND SEVERAL MODERNS.—AN AUTHOR KNOWS MORE OF HIS MERITS THAN HIS READERS—AND LESS OF HIS DEFECTS.—AUTHORS VERSATILE IN THEIR ADMIRATION AND THEIR MALIGNITY 433

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF GENIUS.—DEFECTS OF GREAT COMPOSITIONS ATTRIBUTED TO DOMESTIC INFELICITIES.—THE HOME OF THE LITERARY CHARACTER SHOULD BE THE ABODE OF REPOSE AND SILENCE.—OF THE FATHER.—OF THE MOTHER.—OF FAMILY GENIUS.—MEN OF GENIUS NOT MORE RESPECTED THAN OTHER MEN IN THEIR DOMESTIC CIRCLE.—THE CULTIVATORS OF SCIENCE AND ART DO NOT MEET ON EQUAL TERMS WITH OTHERS, IN DOMESTIC LIFE.—THEIR NEGLECT OF THOSE AROUND THEM.—OFTEN ACCUSED OF IMAGINARY CRIMES . . 438

CHAPTER XVII.

THE POVERTY OF LITERARY MEN.—POVERTY, A RELATIVE QUALITY.—OF THE POVERTY OF LITERARY MEN IN WHAT DEGREE DESIRABLE.—EXTREME POVERTY.—TASK-WORK.—OF GRATUITOUS WORKS.—A PROJECT TO PROVIDE AGAINST THE WORST STATE OF POVERTY AMONG LITERARY MEN 444

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MATRIMONIAL STATE OF LITERATURE.—MATRIMONY SAID NOT TO BE WELL SUITED TO THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF GENIUS.—CELIBACY A CONCEALED CAUSE OF THE EARLY QUERULOUSNESS OF MEN OF GENIUS.—OF UNHAPPY UNIONS.—NOT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT THE WIFE SHOULD BE A LITERARY WOMAN.—OF THE DOCILITY AND SUSCEPTIBILITY OF THE HIGHER FEMALE CHARACTER.—A PICTURE OF A LITERARY WIFE 449

CHAPTER XIX.

LITERARY FRIENDSHIPS.—IN EARLY LIFE.—DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF MEN OF THE WORLD.—THEY SUFFER IN UNRESTRAINED COMMUNICATION OF THEIR IDEAS, AND BEAR REPRIMANDS AND EXHORTATIONS.—UNITY OF FEELINGS.—A SYMPATHY NOT OF MANNERS BUT OF FEELINGS.—ADMIT OF DISSIMILAR CHARACTERS.—THEIR PECULIAR GLORY.—THEIR SORROW 454

CHAPTER XX.

PAGE

THE LITERARY AND THE PERSONAL CHARACTER.—THE PERSONAL DISPOSITIONS OF AN AUTHOR MAY BE THE REVERSE OF THOSE WHICH APPEAR IN HIS WRITINGS.—ERRONEOUS CONCEPTIONS OF THE CHARACTER OF DISTANT AUTHORS.—PARADOXICAL APPEARANCES IN THE HISTORY OF GENIUS.—WHY THE CHARACTER OF THE MAN MAY BE OPPOSITE TO THAT OF HIS WRITINGS 457

CHAPTER XXI.

THE MAN OF LETTERS.—OCCUPIES AN INTERMEDIATE STATION BETWEEN AUTHORS AND READERS.—HIS SOLITUDE DESCRIBED.—OFTEN THE FATHER OF GENIUS.—ATTICUS, A MAN OF LETTERS OF ANTIQUITY.—THE PERFECT CHARACTER OF A MODERN MAN OF LETTERS EXHIBITED IN PEIRESC.—THEIR UTILITY TO AUTHORS AND ARTISTS 461

CHAPTER XXII.

LITERARY OLD AGE STILL LEARNING.—INFLUENCE OF LATE STUDIES IN LIFE.—OCCUPATIONS IN ADVANCED AGE OF THE LITERARY CHARACTER.—OF LITERARY MEN WHO HAVE DIED AT THEIR STUDIES 466

CHAPTER XXIII.

UNIVERSALITY OF GENIUS.—LIMITED NOTION OF GENIUS ENTERTAINED BY THE ANCIENTS.—OPPOSITE FACULTIES ACT WITH DIMINISHED FORCE.—MEN OF GENIUS EXCEL ONLY IN A SINGLE ART 469

CHAPTER XXIV.

LITERATURE AN AVENUE TO GLORY.—AN INTELLECTUAL NOBILITY NOT CHIMERICAL, BUT CREATED BY PUBLIC OPINION.—LITERARY HONOURS OF VARIOUS NATIONS.—LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE MEMORY OF THE MAN OF GENIUS . . . 471

CHAPTER XXV.

NFLUENCE OF AUTHORS ON SOCIETY, AND OF SOCIETY ON AUTHORS.—NATIONAL TASTES A SOURCE OF LITERARY PREJUDICES.—TRUE GENIUS ALWAYS THE ORGAN OF ITS NATION.—MASTER-WRITERS PRESERVE THE DISTINCT NATIONAL CHARACTER.—GENIUS THE ORGAN OF THE STATE OF THE AGE.—CAUSES OF

PAGE

ITS SUPPRESSION IN A PEOPLE. — OFTEN INVENTED, BUT NEGLECTED. — THE NATURAL GRADATIONS OF GENIUS.—MEN OF GENIUS PRODUCE THEIR USEFULNESS IN PRIVACY—THE PUBLIC MIND IS NOW THE CREATION OF THE PUBLIC WRITER. —POLITICIANS AFFECT TO DENY THIS PRINCIPLE.—AUTHORS STAND BETWEEN THE GOVERNORS AND THE GOVERNED.—A VIEW OF THE SOLITARY AUTHOR IN HIS STUDY.—THEY CREATE AN EPOCH IN HISTORY.—INFLUENCE OF POPULAR AUTHORS.—THE IMMORTALITY OF THOUGHT.—THE FAMILY OF GENIUS ILLUSTRATED BY THEIR GENEALOGY 475

LITERARY MISCELLANIES.

LITERARY MISCELLANIES.

MISCELLANISTS.

MISCELLANISTS are the most popular writers among every people; for it is they who form a communication between the learned and the unlearned, and, as it were, throw a bridge between those two great divisions of the public. Literary Miscellanies are classed among philological studies. The studies of philology formerly consisted rather of the labours of arid grammarians and conjectural critics, than of that more elegant philosophy which has, within our own time, been introduced into literature, and which, by its graces and investigation, augment the beauties of original genius. This delightful province has been termed in Germany the *Æsthetic*, from a Greek term signifying sentiment or feeling. Æsthetic critics fathom the depths, or run with the current of an author's thoughts, and the sympathies of such a critic offer a supplement to the genius of the original writer. Longinus and Addison are Æsthetic critics. The critics of the adverse school always look for a precedent, and if none is found, woe to the originality of a great writer!

Very elaborate criticisms have been formed by eminent writers, in which great learning and acute logic have only betrayed the absence of the Æsthetic faculty. Warburton called Addison an empty superficial writer, destitute himself of an atom of Addison's taste for the beautiful; and Johnson is a flagrant instance that great powers of reasoning are more fatal to the works of imagination than had ever been suspected.

By one of these learned critics was Montaigne, the venerable father of modern Miscellanies, called "a bold ignorant fellow." To thinking readers, this critical summary will appear mysterious; for Montaigne had imbibed the spirit of all the moral writers of antiquity; and although he has made a capricious complaint of a defective memory, we cannot but wish the complaint had been more real; for we discover in his works such a gathering of knowledge that it seems at times to stifle his own energies. Montaigne was censured by Scaliger, as Addison was censured by Warburton; because both, like Socrates, smiled at that mere erudition which consists of knowing the thoughts of others and having no thoughts of our own. To weigh syllables, and to arrange dates, to adjust texts, and to heap annotations, has generally proved the absence of the higher faculties. When a more adventurous spirit, of this herd, attempts some novel discovery, often men of taste behold, with indignation, the perversions of their understanding; and a Bentley in his Milton, or a Warburton on a Virgil, had either a singular imbecility concealed under the arrogance of the scholar, or they did not believe what they told the public; the one in his extraordinary invention of an interpolating editor, and the other in his more extraordinary explanation of the Eleusinian mysteries. But what was still worse, the froth of the head became venom, when it reached the heart.

Montaigne has also been censured for an apparent vanity, in making himself the idol of his lucubrations. If he had not done this, he had not performed the promise he makes at the commencement of his preface. An engaging tenderness prevails in these *naïve* expressions which shall not be injured by a version. "Je l'ay voué à la commodité particulière de mes parens et amis; à ce que m'ayans perdu (ce qu'ils ont à faire bientost) ils y puissent retrouver quelques traicts de mes humeurs, et que par ce moyen ils nourrissent plus entière et plus vifue la conoissance qu'ils ont eu de moi."

Those authors who appear sometimes to forget they are writers, and remember they are men, will be our favourites. He who writes from the heart, will write to the heart; every one is enabled to decide on his merits, and they will not be referred to learned heads, or a distant day. "Why," says

Boileau, "are my verses read by all? It is only because they speak truths, and that I am convinced of the truths I write."

Why have some of our fine writers interested more than others, who have not displayed inferior talents? Why is Addison still the first of our essayists? he has sometimes been excelled in criticisms more philosophical, in topics more interesting, and in diction more coloured. But there is a personal charm in the character he has assumed in his periodical Miscellanies, which is felt with such a gentle force, that we scarce advert to it. He has painted forth his little humours, his individual feelings, and eternised himself to his readers. Johnson and Hawkesworth we receive with respect, and we dismiss with awe; we come from their writings as from public lectures, and from Addison's as from private conversations. Montaigne preferred those of the ancients, who appear to write under a conviction of what they said; the eloquent Cicero declaims but coldly on liberty, while in the impetuous Brutus may be perceived a man who is resolved to purchase it with his life. We know little of Plutarch; yet a spirit of honesty and persuasion in his works expresses a philosophical character capable of imitating, as well as admiring, the virtues he records.

Sterne perhaps derives a portion of his celebrity from the same influence; he interests us in his minutest motions, for he tells us all he feels.—Richardson was sensible of the power with which these minute strokes of description enter the heart, and which are so many fastenings to which the imagination clings. He says, "If I give speeches and conversations, I ought to give them justly; for the humours and characters of persons cannot be known, unless I repeat *what* they say, and their *manner* of saying." I confess I am infinitely pleased when Sir William Temple acquaints us with the size of his orange-trees, and with the flavour of his peaches and grapes, confessed by Frenchmen to equal those of France; with his having had the honour to naturalise in this country four kinds of grapes, with his liberal distribution of them because "he ever thought all things of this kind the commoner they are the better." In a word with his passionate attachment to his garden, where he desired his heart to be buried, of his desire to escape from great employments, and having passed five years without going to town, where, by the way, "he had a large house always ready to receive him." Dryden has interspersed many of these little particulars in his prosaic compositions, and I think, that his character and dispositions may be more correctly acquired by uniting these scattered notices, than by any biographical account which can now be given of thisman of genius.

From this agreeable mode of writing, a species of compositions may be discriminated, which seems above all others to identify the reader with the writer; compositions which are often discovered in a fugitive state, but to which their authors were prompted by the fine impulses of genius, derived from the peculiarity of their situation. Dictated by the heart, or polished with the fondness of delight, these productions are impressed by the seductive eloquence of genius, or attach us by the sensibility of taste. The object thus selected is no task imposed on the mind of the writer, for the mere ambition of literature; but is a voluntary effusion, warm with all the sensations of a pathetic writer. In a word, they are the compositions of genius, on a subject in which it is most deeply interested; which it revolves on all its sides, which it paints in all its tints, and which it finishes with the same ardour it began. Among such works may be placed the exiled Bolingbroke's "Reflections upon Exile;" the retired Petrarch and Zimmerman's Essays on "Solitude;" the imprisoned Boethius's "Consolations of Philosophy;" the oppressed Pierius Valerianus's Catalogue of "Literary Calamities;" the deformed Hay's Essay on "Deformity;" the projecting De Foe's "Essays on Projects;" the liberal Shenstone's poem on "Economy."

We may respect the profound genius of voluminous writers; they are a kind of painters who occupy great room, and fill up, as a satirist expresses it, "an acre of canvas." But we love to dwell on those more delicate pieces,—a group of Cupids; a Venus emerging from the waves; a Psyche or an Aglaia, which embellish the cabinet of the man of taste.

It should, indeed, be the characteristic of good Miscellanies, to be multifarious and concise. Usbek, the Persian of Montesquieu, is one of the profoundest philosophers, his letters are however but concise pages. Rochefoucault and La Bruyère are not superficial observers of human nature, although they have only written sentences. Of Tacitus it has been finely remarked by Montesquieu that "he abridged everything because he saw everything." Montaigne approves of Plutarch and Seneca, because their loose papers were suited to his dispositions, and where knowledge is acquired without a tedious study. "It is," says he, "no great attempt to take one in hand, and I give over at pleasure, for they have no sequel or connexion." La Fontaine agreeably applauds short compositions:

> "Les longs ouvrages me font peur;
> Loin d'épuiser une matière,
> On n'en doit prendre que la fleur;"

and old Francis Osborne has a coarse and ludicrous image in favour of such opuscula; he says, "Huge volumes, like the oxe roasted whole at Bar-

tholomew fair, may proclaim plenty of labour and invention, but affordless of what is delicate, savory, and well concocted, than *smaller pieces.*" To quote so light a genius as the enchanting LaFontaine, and so solid a mind as the sensible Osborne, is taking in all the climates of the human mind; it is touching at the equator, and pushing on to the pole.

Montaigne's works have been called by a cardinal "The Breviary of Idlers." It is therefore the book of man; for all men are idlers; we have hours which we pass with lamentation, and which we know are always returning. At those moments miscellanists are conformable to all our humours. We dart along their airy and concise page; and their lively anecdote, or their profound observation, are so many interstitial pleasures in our listless hours.

The ancients were great admirers of miscellanies; Aulus Gellius has preserved a copious list of titles of such works. These titles are so numerous, and include such gay and pleasing descriptions, that we may infer by their number that they were greatly admired by the public, and by their titles that they prove the great delight their authors experienced in their composition. Among the titles are "a basket of flowers;" "an embroidered mantle;" and "a variegated meadow." Such a miscellanist as was the admirable Erasmus, deserves the happy description which Plutarch with an elegant enthusiasm bestows on Menander: he calls him the delight of philosophers fatigued with study; that they have recourse to his works as to a meadow enamelled with flowers, where the sense is delighted by a purer air; and very elegantly adds, that Menander has a salt peculiar to himself, drawn from the same waters that gave birth to Venus.

The Troubadours, Conteurs, and Jongleurs, practised what is yet called in the southern parts of France, *Le guay Saber*, or the gay science. I consider these as the Miscellanists of their day; they had their grave moralities, their tragical histories, and their sportive tales; their verse and their prose. The village was in motion at their approach; the castle was opened to the ambulatory poets, and the feudal hypochondriac listened to their solemn instruction and their airy fancy. I would call miscellaneous composition LE GUAY SABER, and I would have every miscellaneous writer as solemn and as gay, as various and as pleasing, as these lively artists of versatility.

Nature herself is most delightful in her miscellaneous scenes. When I hold a volume of miscellanies, and run over with avidity the titles of its contents, my mind is enchanted, as if it were placed among the landscapes of Valais, which Rousseau has described with such picturesque beauty. I fancy myself seated in a cottage amid those mountains, those valleys, those rocks, encircled by the enchantments of optical illusion. I look, and behold at once the united seasons—"All climates in one place, all seasons in one instant." I gaze at once on a hundred rainbows, and trace the romantic figures of the shifting clouds. I seem to be in a temple dedicated to the service of the Goddess VARIETY.

PREFACES.

I DECLARE myself infinitely delighted by a preface. Is it exquisitely written? no literary morsel is more delicious. Is the author inveterately dull? it is a kind of preparatory information, which may be very useful. It argues a deficiency in taste to turn over an elaborate preface unread; for it is the attar of the author's roses; every drop distilled at an immense cost. It is the reason of the reasoning, and the folly of the foolish.

I do not wish, however, to conceal, that several writers, as well as readers, have spoken very disrespectfully of this species of literature. That fine writer Montesquieu, in closing the preface to his "Persian Letters," says, "I do not praise my 'Persians;' because it would be a very tedious thing, put in a place already very tedious of itself; I mean a preface." Spence, in the preface to his "Polymetis," informs us, that "there is not any sort of writing which he sits down to with so much unwillingness as that of prefaces; and as he believes most people are not much fonder of reading them than he is of writing them, he shall get over this as fast as he can." Pelisson warmly protested against prefatory composition; but when he published the works of Sarrasin, was wise enough to compose a very pleasing one. He, indeed, endeavoured to justify himself for acting against his own opinions, by this ingenious excuse, that, like funeral honours, it is proper to show the utmost regard for them when given to others, but to be inattentive to them for ourselves.

Notwithstanding all this evidence, I have some good reasons for admiring prefaces; and barren as the investigation may appear, some literary amusement can be gathered.

In the first place I observe, that a prefacer is generally a most accomplished liar. Is an author to be introduced to the public? the preface is as genuine a panegyric, and nearly as long a one, as that of Pliny's on the Emperor Trajan. Such a preface is ringing an alarum bell for an author. If we look closer into the characters of these masters of ceremony, who thus sport with and defy the judgment of their reader, and who, by their extravagant panegyric, do considerable injury to the cause of taste, we discover that some accidental occurrence has occasioned this vehement

affection for the author, and which, like that of another kind of love, makes one commit so many extravagances.

Prefaces are indeed rarely sincere. It is justly observed by Shenstone in his prefatory Essay to the Elegies, that, "discourses prefixed to poetry inculcate such tenets as may exhibit the performance to the greatest advantage. The fabric is first raised, and the measures by which we are to judge of it are afterwards adjusted." This observation might be exemplified by more instances than some readers might choose to read. It will be sufficient to observe with what art both Pope and Fontenelle have drawn up their Essays on the nature of Pastoral Poetry, that the rules they wished to establish might be adapted to their own pastorals. Has accident made some ingenious student apply himself to a subordinate branch of literature, or to some science which is not highly esteemed—look in the preface for its sublime panegyric. Collectors of coins, dresses, and butterflies, have astonished the world with eulogiums which would raise their particular studies into the first ranks of philosophy.

It would appear that there is no lie to which a prefacer is not tempted. I pass over the commodious prefaces of Dryden, which were ever adapted to the poem and not to poetry, to the author and not to literature.

The boldest preface-liar was Aldus Manutius, who having printed an edition of Aristophanes, first published in the preface that Saint Chrysostom was accustomed to place this comic poet under his pillow, that he might always have his works at hand. As, in that age, a saint was supposed to possess every human talent, good taste not excepted, Aristophanes thus recommended became a general favourite. The anecdote lasted for near two centuries; and what was of greater consequence to Aldus, quickened the sale of his Aristophanes. This ingenious invention of the prefacer of Aristophanes at length was detected by Menage.

The insincerity of prefaces arises whenever an author would disguise his solicitude for his work, by appearing negligent, and even undesirous of its success. A writer will rarely conclude such a preface without betraying himself. I think, that even Dr. Johnson forgot his sound dialectic in the admirable Preface to his Dictionary. In one part he says, "having laboured this work with so much application, I cannot but have some degree of parental fondness." But, in his conclusion, he tells us, "I dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise." I deny the doctor's "frigidity." This polished period exhibits an affected stoicism, which no writer ever felt for the anxious labour of a great portion of life, addressed not merely to a class of readers, but to literary Europe.

But if prefaces are rarely sincere or just, they are, notwithstanding, literary opuscula in which the author is materially concerned. A work with a poor preface, like a person who comes with an indifferent recommendation, must display uncommon merit to master our prejudices, and to please us, as it were, in spite of ourselves. Works ornamented by a finished preface, such as Johnson not infrequently presented to his friends or his booksellers, inspire us with awe; we observe a veteran guard placed in the porch, and we are induced to conclude from this appearance that some person of eminence resides in the place itself.

The public are treated with contempt, when an author professes to publish his puerilities. This Warburton did, in his pompous edition of Shakespeare. In the preface he informed the public, that his notes "were among his *younger amusements*, when he turned over these *sort of writers*." This ungracious compliment to Shakespeare and the public, merited that perfect scourging which our haughty commentator received from the sarcastic Canons of Criticism. Scudery was a writer of some genius, and great variety. His prefaces are remarkable for their gasconades. In his epic poem of Alaric, he says, "I have such a facility in writing verses, and also in my invention, that a poem of double its length would have cost me little trouble. Although it contains only eleven thousand lines, I believe, that longer epics do not exhibit more embellishments than mine." And to conclude with one more student of this class, Amelot de la Houssaie, in the preface to his translation of "the Prince" of Machiavel, instructs us, that "he considers his copy as superior to the original, because it is everywhere intelligible, and Machiavel is frequently obscure." I have seen in the play-bills of strollers, a very pompous description of the triumphant entry of Alexander into Babylon; had they said nothing about the triumph, it might have passed without exciting ridicule; and one might not so maliciously have perceived how ill the four candle-snuffers crawled as elephants, and the triumphal car discovered its want of a lid. But having pre-excited attention, we had full leisure to sharpen our eye. To these imprudent authors and actors we may apply a Spanish proverb, which has the peculiar quaintness of that people, *Aviendo pregonado vino, venden vinagre;* "Having cried up their wine, they sell us vinegar."

A ridiculous humility in a preface is not less despicable. Many idle apologies were formerly in vogue for publication, and formed a literary cant, of which now the meanest writers perceive the futility. A literary anecdote of the Romans has

been preserved, which is sufficiently curious. One Albinus, in the preface to his Roman History, intercedes for pardon for his numerous blunders of phraseology; observing that they were the more excusable, as he had composed his history in the Greek language, with which he was not so familiar as his maternal tongue. Cato severely rallies him on this; and justly observes, that our Albinus had merited the pardon he solicits, if a decree of the senate had compelled him thus to have composed it, and he could not have obtained a dispensation. The avowal of our ignorance of the language we employ, is like that excuse which some writers make for composing on topics, in which they are little conversant. A reader's heart is not so easily mollified; and it is a melancholy truth for literary men, that the pleasure of abusing an author is generally superior to that of admiring him. One appears to display more critical acumen than the other, by showing, that though we do not choose to take the trouble of writing, we have infinitely more genius than the author. These suppliant prefacers are described by Boileau.

"Un auteur à genoux dans une humble préface
Au lecteur qu'il ennuie a beau demander grace;
Il ne gagnera rien sur ce juge irrité,
Qui lui fait son procès de pleine autorité."

Low in a humble preface authors kneel;
In vain, the wearied reader's heart is steel.
Callous, that irritated judge with awe,
Inflicts the penalties and arms the law.

The most entertaining prefaces in our language are those of Dryden; and though it is ill-naturedly said, by Swift, that they were merely formed

"To raise the volume's price a shilling,"

yet these were the earliest commencements of English criticism, and the first attempt to restrain the capriciousness of readers, and to form a national taste. Dryden has had the candour to acquaint us with his secret of prefatory composition; for in that one to his Tales he says, "the nature of preface-writing is rambling; never wholly out of the way, nor in it. This I have learnt from the practice of honest Montaigne." There is no great risk in establishing this observation as an axiom in literature; for should a prefacer loiter, it is never difficult to get rid of lame persons, by escaping from them; and the reader may make a preface as concise as he chooses.

It is possible for an author to paint himself in amiable colours, in this useful page, without incurring the contempt of egotism. After a writer has rendered himself conspicuous by his industry or his genius, his admirers are not displeased to hear something relative to him from himself. Hayley, in the preface to his Poems, has conveyed an amiable feature in his personal character, by giving the cause of his devotion to literature as the only mode by which he could render himself of some utility to his country. There is a modesty in the prefaces of Pope, even when this great poet collected his immortal works; and in several other writers of the most elevated genius, in a Hume and a Robertson, which becomes their happy successors to imitate, and inferior writers to contemplate with awe.

There is in prefaces a due respect to be shown to the public, and to ourselves. He that has no sense of self-dignity, will not inspire any reverence in others; and the ebriety of vanity will be sobered by the alacrity we all feel in disturbing the dreams of self-love. If we dare not attempt the rambling prefaces of a Dryden, we may still entertain the reader, and soothe him into good-humour, for our own interest. This, perhaps, will be best obtained by making the preface (like a symphony to an opera) to contain something analogous to the work itself, to attune the mind into a harmony of tone.*

STYLE.

EVERY period of literature has its peculiar style, derived from some author of reputation; and the history of a language, as an object of taste, might be traced through a collection of ample quotations, from the most celebrated authors of each period.

To Johnson may be attributed the establishment of our present refinement, and it is with truth he observes of his Rambler, "That he had laboured to refine our language to grammatical purity, and to clear it from colloquial barbarisms, licentious idioms, and irregular combinations, and that he has added to the elegance of its construction and to the harmony of its cadence." In this description of his own refinement in style and grammatical accuracy, Johnson probably alluded to the happy carelessness of Addison, whose charm of natural ease long afterwards he discovered. But great inelegance of diction disgraced our language even so late as in 1736, when the "Inquiry into the Life of Homer" was published. That author was certainly desirous of all the graces of composition, and his volume by its singular sculptures evinces his inordinate affection for his work. This fanciful writer had a taste for polished writing, yet he abounds in expressions which now would be considered as impure in literary composition. Such vulgarisms are common—the Greeks *fell to their old trade* of one tribe expelling another—the scene is always at Athens, and all the *pother* is some little jilting story—the haughty Roman

* See Curiosities of Literature, p. 25, 11th edition, for an article on Prefaces.

snuffed at the suppleness. If such diction had not been usual with good writers at that period, I should not have quoted Blackwall. Middleton, in his Life of Cicero, though a man of classical taste, and an historian of a classical era, could not preserve himself from colloquial inelegances; the greatest characters are levelled by the poverty of his style. Warburton, and his imitator Hurd, and other living critics of that school, are loaded with familliar idioms, which at present would debase even the style of conversation.

Such was the influence of the elaborate novelty of Johnson, that every writer in every class servilely copied the latinised style, ludicrously mimicking the contortions and re-echoing the sonorous nothings of our great lexicographer; the novelist of domestic life, or the agriculturist in a treatise on turnips, alike aimed at the polysyllabic force, and the cadenced period. Such was the condition of English style for more than twenty years.

Some argue in favour of a natural style, and reiterate the opinion of many great critics that proper ideas will be accompanied by proper words; but though supported by the first authorities, they are not perhaps sufficiently precise in their definition. Writers may think justly, and yet write without any effect; while a splendid style may cover a vacuity of thought. Does not this evident fact prove that style and thinking have not that inseparable connexion which many great writers have pronounced? Milton imagined that beautiful thoughts produce beautiful expression.—He says,

> "Then feed on thoughts that voluntary move
> Harmonious numbers."—

Writing is justly called an art; and Rousseau says, it is not an art easily acquired. Thinking may be the foundation of style; but it is not the superstructure; it is the marble of the edifice, but not its architecture. The art of presenting our thoughts to another, is often a process of considerable time and labour; and the delicate task of correction, in the development of ideas, is reserved only for writers of fine taste. There are several modes of presenting an idea; vulgar readers are only susceptible of the strong and palpable stroke; but there are many shades of sentiment, which to seize on and to paint, is the pride and the labour of a skilful writer. A beautiful simplicity itself is a species of refinement, and no writer more solicitously corrected his works than Hume, who excels in this mode of composition. The philosopher highly approves of Addison's definition of fine writing, who says, that it consists of sentiments which are natural, without being obvious. This is a definition of thought rather than of composition. Shenstone has hit the truth; for fine writing he defines to be generally the effect of spontaneous thoughts and a laboured style. Addison was not insensible to these charms, and he felt the seductive art of Cicero when he said, that "there is as much difference in apprehending a thought clothed in Cicero's language, and that of a common author, as in seeing an object by the light of a taper, or by the light of the sun."

MANNERISTS in style, however great their powers, rather excite the admiration than the affection of a man of taste; because their habitual art dissipates that illusion of sincerity, which we love to believe is the impulse which places the pen in the hand of an author. Two eminent literary mannerists are Cicero and Johnson. We know these great men considered their eloquence as a deceptive art; of any subject it had been indifferent to them which side to adopt; and in reading their elaborate works, our ear is more frequently gratified by the ambitious magnificence of their diction, than our heart penetrated by the pathetic enthusiasm of their sentiments. Writers who are not mannerists, but who seize the appropriate tone of their subject, appear to feel a conviction of what they attempt to persuade their reader. It is observable, that it is impossible to imitate with uniform felicity the noble simplicity of a pathetic writer; while the peculiarities of a mannerist are so far from being difficult, that they are displayed with nice exactness by middling writers, who, although their own natural manner had nothing interesting, have attracted notice by such imitations. We may apply to some monotonous mannerists these verses of Boileau:

> "Voulez-vous du public mériter les amours?
> Sans cesse en écrivant variez vos discours.
> On lit peu ces auteurs nés pour nous ennuier,
> Qui toujours sur un ton semblent psalmodier."
>
> Would you the public's envied favours gain?
> Ceaseless, in writing, variegate the strain;
> The heavy author, who the fancy calms,
> Seems in one tone to chant his nasal psalms.

Every style is excellent, if it be proper; and that style is most proper which can best convey the intentions of the author to his reader. And after all, it is STYLE alone by which posterity will judge of a great work, for an author can have nothing truly his own but his style; facts, scientific discoveries, and every kind of information, may be seized by all, but an author's diction cannot be taken from him. Hence very learned writers have been neglected, while their learning has not been lost to the world, by having been given by writers with more amenity. It is, therefore, the duty of an author, to learn to write as well as to learn to think; and this art can only be obtained by the habitual study of his sensations, and an intimate acquaintance with the intellectual facul-

ties. These are the true prompters of those felicitous expression, which give a tone congruous to the subject; and which invest our thoughts with all the illusion, the beauty, and motion of lively perception.

GOLDSMITH AND JOHNSON.

We should not censure artists and writers for their attachment to their favourite excellence. Who but an artist can value the ceaseless inquietudes of arduous perfection; can trace the remote possibilities combined in a close union; the happy arrangement and the novel variation? He not only is affected by the performance like the man of taste, but is influenced by a peculiar sensation; for while he contemplates the apparent beauties, he traces in his own mind those invisible processes by which the final beauty was accomplished. Hence arises that species of comparative criticism which one great author usually makes of his own manner with that of another great writer, and which so often causes him to be stigmatised with the most unreasonable vanity.

The character of Goldsmith, so underrated in his own day, exemplifies this principle in the literary character. That pleasing writer, without any perversion of intellect or inflation of vanity, might have contrasted his powers with those of Johnson, and might, according to his own ideas, have considered himself as not inferior to his more celebrated and learned rival.

Goldsmith might have preferred the felicity of his own genius, which like a native stream flowed from a natural source, to the elaborate powers of Johnson, which in some respect may be compared to those artificial waters which throw their sparkling currents in the air, to fall into marble basins. He might have considered that he had embellished philosophy with poetical elegance; and have preferred the paintings of his descriptions, to the terse versification and the pointed sentences of Johnson. He might have been more pleased with the faithful representations of English manners in his Vicar of Wakefield, than with the borrowed grandeur and the exotic fancy of the oriental Rasselas. He might have believed, what many excellent critics have believed, that in this age comedy requires more genius than tragedy; and with his audience he might have infinitely more esteemed his own original humour, than Johnson's rhetorical declamation. He might have thought, that with inferior literature he displayed superior genius, and with less profundity more gaiety. He might have considered, that the facility and vivacity of his pleasing compositions were preferable to that art, that habitual pomp, and that ostentatious eloquence, which prevail in the operose labours of Johnson. No one might be more sensible than himself, that he, according to the happy expression of Johnson (when his rival was in the grave) "tetigit et ornavit." Goldsmith, therefore, without any singular vanity, might have concluded from his own reasonings, that he was not an inferior writer to Johnson: all this not having been considered, he has come down to posterity as the vainest and the most jealous of writers; he whose dispositions were the most inoffensive, whose benevolence was the most extensive, and whose amiableness of heart has been concealed by its artlessness, and passed over in the sarcasms and sneers of a more eloquent rival, and his submissive partisans.

SELF-CHARACTERS.

There are two species of minor biography which may be discriminated; detailing our own life and portraying our own character. The writing our own life has been practised with various success; it is a delicate operation, a stroke too much may destroy the effect of the whole. If once we detect an author deceiving or deceived, it is a livid spot which infects the entire body. To publish one's own life has sometimes been a poor artifice to bring obscurity into notice; it is the ebriety of vanity, and the delirium of egotism. When a great man leaves some memorial of his days, the grave consecrates the motive. There are certain things which relate to ourselves, which no one can know so well; a great genius obliges posterity when he records them. But they must be composed with calmness, with simplicity, and with sincerity; the biographic sketch of Hume, written by himself, is a model of Attic simplicity. The Life of Lord Herbert is a biographical curiosity. The Memoirs of Sir William Jones, of Priestley, and of Gibbon, offer us the daily life of the student; and those of Colley Cibber are a fine picture of the self-painter. We have some other pieces of self-biography, precious to the philosopher.

The other species of minor biography, that of portraying our own character, could only have been invented by the most refined and the vainest nation. The French long cherished this darling egotism; and have a collection of these self-portraits in two bulky volumes. The brilliant Fléchier, and the refined St. Evremond, have framed and glazed their portraits. Every writer then considered his character as necessary as his preface. The fashion seems to have passed over to our country; Farquhar has drawn his character in a letter to a lady; and others of our writers have given us their own miniatures.

There was, as a book in my possession will

testify, a certain verse-maker of the name of Cantenac, who, in 1662, published in the city of Paris a volume, containing some thousands of verses, which were, as his countrymen express it, *de sa façon*, after his own way. He fell so suddenly into the darkest and deepest pit of oblivion, that not a trace of his memory would have remained, had he not condescended to give ample information of every particular relative to himself. He has acquainted us with his size, and tells us "that it is rare to see a man smaller than himself. I have that in common with all dwarfs, that if my head only were seen, I should be thought a large man." This atom in creation then describes his oval and full face; his fiery and eloquent eyes; his vermil lips; his robust constitution, and his effervescent passions. He appears to have been a most petulant, honest, and diminutive being.

The description of his intellect is the object of our curiosity. "I am as ambitious as any person can be; but I would not sacrifice my honour to my ambition. I am so sensible to contempt, that I bear a mortal and implacable hatred against those who contemn me, and I know I could never reconcile myself with them; but I spare no attentions for those I love; I would give them my fortune and my life. I sometimes lie; but generally in affairs of gallantry, where I voluntarily confirm falsehoods by oaths, without reflection, for swearing with me is a habit. I am told that my mind is brilliant, and that I have a certain manner in turning a thought which is quite my own. I am agreeable in conversation, though I confess I am often troublesome; for I maintain paradoxes to display my genius, which savour too much of scholastic subterfuges. I speak too often and too long; and as I have some reading, and a copious memory, I am fond of showing whatever I know. My judgment is not so solid as my wit is lively. I am often melancholy and unhappy; and this sombrous disposition proceeds from my numerous disappointments in life. My verse is preferred to my prose; and it has been of some use to me in pleasing the fair sex; poetry is most adapted to persuade women; but otherwise it has been of no service to me, and has, I fear, rendered me unfit for many advantageous occupations, in which I might have drudged. The esteem of the fair has, however, charmed away my complaints. This good fortune has been obtained by me, at the cost of many cares, and an unsubdued patience; for I am one of those who, in affairs of love, will suffer an entire year, to taste the pleasures of one day."

This character of Cantenac has some local features; for an English poet would hardly console himself with so much gaiety. The Frenchman's attachment to the ladies seems to be equivalent to the advantageous occupations he had lost. But as the miseries of a literary man, without conspicuous talents, are always the same at Paris as in London, there are some parts of this character of Cantenac which appear to describe them with truth. Cantenac was a man of honour; as warm in his resentment as his gratitude; but deluded by literary vanity, he became a writer in prose and verse, and while he saw the prospects of life closing on him, probably considered that the age was unjust. A melancholy example for certain volatile and fervent spirits, who, by becoming authors, either submit their felicity to the caprices of others, or annihilate the obscure comforts of life, and, like him, having "been told that their mind is brilliant, and that they have a certain manner in turning a thought," become writers, and complain that they are "often melancholy, owing to their numerous disappointments." Happy, however, if the obscure, yet too sensible writer, can suffer an entire year, for the enjoyment of a single day! But for this, a man must have been born in France.

ON READING.

Writing is justly denominated an art; I think that reading claims the same distinction. To adorn ideas with elegance is an act of the mind superior to that of receiving them; but to receive them with a happy discrimination, is the effect of a practised taste.

Yet it will be found that taste alone is not sufficient to obtain the proper end of reading. Two persons of equal taste rise from the perusal of the same book with very different notions: the one will have the ideas of the author at command, and find a new train of sentiment awakened; while the other quits his author in a pleasing distraction, but of the pleasures of reading nothing remains but tumultuous sensations.

To account for these different effects, we must have recourse to a logical distinction, which appears to reveal one of the great mysteries in the art of reading. Logicians distinguish between perceptions and ideas. Perception is that faculty of the mind which notices the simple impression of objects: but when these objects exist in the mind, and are there treasured and arranged as materials for reflection, then they are called ideas. A perception is like a transient sunbeam, which just shows the object, but leaves neither light nor warmth; while an idea is like the fervid beam of noon, which throws a settled and powerful light.

Many ingenious readers complain that their memory is defective, and their studies unfruitful. This defect arises from their indulging the facile

pleasures of perceptions, in preference to the laborious habit of forming them into ideas. Perceptions require only the sensibility of taste, and their pleasures are continuous, easy, and exquisite. Ideas are an art of combination, and an exertion of the reasoning powers. Ideas are therefore labours; and for those who will not labour, it is unjust to complain, if they come from the harvest with scarcely a sheaf in their hands.

There are secrets in the art of reading, which tend to facilitate its purposes, by assisting the memory, and augmenting intellectual opulence. Some, our own ingenuity must form, and perhaps every student has peculiar habits of study, as, in short-hand, almost every writer has a system of his own.

It is an observation of the elder Pliny, (who, having been a voluminous compiler, must have had great experience in the art of reading,) that there was no book so bad, but which contained something good. To read every book would, however, be fatal to the interest of most readers; but it is not always necessary, in the pursuits of learning, to read every book entire. Of many books it is sufficient to seize the plan, and to examine some of their portions. Of the little supplement at the close of a volume, few readers conceive the utility; but some of the most eminent writers in Europe have been great adepts in the art of index reading. I, for my part, venerate the inventor of indexes; and I know not to whom to yield the preference, either to Hippocrates, who was the first great anatomiser of the human body, or to that unknown labourer in literature who first laid open the nerves and arteries of a book. Watts advises the perusal of the prefaces and the index of a book, as they both give light on its contents.

The ravenous appetite of Johnson for reading is expressed in a strong metaphor by Mrs. Knowles, who said, "he knows how to read better than any one; he gets at the substance of a book directly; he tears out the heart of it." Gibbon has a new idea in the Art of Reading; he says, "we ought not to attend to the order of our books so much as of our thoughts." The perusal of a particular work gives birth perhaps to ideas unconnected with the subject it treats; I pursue these ideas, and quit my proposed plan of reading. Thus in the midst of Homer he read Longinus; a chapter of Longinus led to an epistle of Pliny; and having finished Longinus, he followed the train of his ideas of the sublime and beautiful in the Enquiry of Burke, and concluded by comparing the ancient with the modern Longinus.

There are some mechanical aids in reading which may prove of great utility, and form a kind of rejuvenescence of our early studies. Montaigne placed at the end of a book which he intended not to reperuse, the time he had read it, with a concise decision on its merits; "that," says he, "it may thus represent to me the air and general idea I had conceived of the author, in reading the work." We have several of these annotations. Of Young the poet it is noticed, that whenever he came to a striking passage he folded the leaf; and that at his death, books have been found in his library which had long resisted the power of closing: a mode more easy than useful; for after a length of time they must be again read to know why they were folded. This difficulty is obviated by those who note in a blank leaf the pages to be referred to, with a word of criticism. Nor let us consider these minute directions as unworthy the most enlarged minds; by these petty exertions, at the most distant periods, may learning obtain its authorities, and fancy combine its ideas. Seneca, in sending some volumes to his friend Lucilius, accompanies them with notes of particular passages, "that," he observes, "you who only aim at the useful may be spared the trouble of examining them entire." I have seen books noted by Voltaire with a word of censure or approbation on the page itself, which was his usual practice; and these volumes are precious to every man of taste. Formey complained that the books he lent Voltaire were returned always disfigured by his remarks; but he was a writer of the old school.

A professional student should divide his readings into a *uniform* reading which is useful, and into a *diversified* reading which is pleasant. Guy Patin, an eminent physician and man of letters, had a just notion of this manner. He says, "I daily read Hippocrates, Galen, Fernel, and other illustrious masters of my profession; this I call my profitable readings. I frequently read Ovid, Juvenal, Horace, Seneca, Tacitus, and others, and these are my recreations." We must observe these distinctions; for it frequently happens that a lawyer or a physician, with great industry and love of study, by giving too much into his diversified readings, may utterly neglect what should be his uniform studies.

A reader is too often a prisoner attached to the triumphal car of an author of great celebrity; and when he ventures not to judge for himself, conceives, while he is reading the indifferent works of great authors, that the languor which he experiences arises from his own defective taste. But the best writers, when they are voluminous, have a great deal of mediocrity.

On the other side, readers must not imagine that all the pleasures of composition depend on the author, for there is something which a reader himself must bring to the book that the book may please. There is a literary appetite, which the author can no more impart than the most skilful

cook can give an appetency to the guests. When Cardinal Richelieu said to Godeau, that he did not understand his verses, the honest poet replied that it was not his fault. The temporary tone of the mind may be unfavourable to taste a work properly, and we have had many erroneous criticisms from great men, which may often be attributed to this circumstance. The mind communicates its infirm dispositions to the book, and an author has not only his own defects to account for, but also those of his reader. There is something in composition like the game of shuttlecock, where if the reader do not quickly rebound the feathered cork to the author, the game is destroyed, and the whole spirit of the work falls extinct.

A frequent impediment in reading is a disinclination in the mind to settle on the subject; agitated by incongruous and dissimilar ideas, it is with pain that we admit those of the author. But on applying ourselves with a gentle violence to the perusal of an interesting work, the mind soon assimilates to the subject; the ancient rabbins advised their young students to apply themselves to their readings, whether they felt an inclination or not, because, as they proceeded, they would find their disposition restored and their curiosity awakened.

Readers may be classed into an infinite number of divisions; but an author is a solitary being, who, for the same reason he pleases one, must consequently displease another. To have too exalted a genius is more prejudicial to his celebrity than to have a moderate one; for we shall find that the most popular works are not the most profound, but such as instruct those who require instruction, and charm those who are not too learned to taste their novelty. Lucilius, the satirist, said, that he did not write for Persius, for Scipio, and for Rutilius, persons eminent for their science, but for the Tarentines, the Consentines, and the Sicilians. Montaigne has complained that he found his readers too learned, or too ignorant, and that he could only please a middle class, who have just learning enough to comprehend him. Congreve says, "there is in true beauty something which vulgar souls cannot admire." Balzac complains bitterly of readers,—"A period," he cries, "shall have cost us the labour of a day; we shall have distilled into an essay the essence of our mind; it may be a finished piece of art; and they think they are indulgent when they pronounce it to contain some pretty things, and that the style is not bad!" There is something in exquisite composition which ordinary readers can never understand.

Authors are vain, but readers are capricious. Some will only read old books, as if there were no valuable truths to be discovered in modern publications; while others will only read new books, as if some valuable truths are not among the old. Some will not read a book, because they are acquainted with the author; by which the reader may be more injured than the author: others not only read the book, but would also read the man; by which the most ingenious author may be injured by the most impertinent reader.

ON HABITUATING OURSELVES TO AN INDIVIDUAL PURSUIT.

Two things in human life are at continual variance, and without escaping from the one we must be separated from the other; and these are *ennui* and *pleasure*. Ennui is an afflicting sensation, if we may thus express it, from a want of sensation; and pleasure is greater pleasure according to the quantity of sensation. That sensation is received in proportion to the capacity of our organs; and that practice, or, as it has been sometimes called, "educated feeling," enlarges this capacity, is evident in such familiar instances as those of the blind, who have a finer tact, and the jeweller, who has a finer sight, than other men who are not so deeply interested in refining their vision and their touch. Intense attention is, therefore, a certain means of deriving more numerous pleasures from its object.

Hence it is that the poet, long employed on a poem, has received a quantity of pleasure which no reader can ever feel. In the progress of any particular pursuit, there are a hundred fugitive sensations which are too intellectual to be embodied into language. Every artist knows that between the thought that first gave rise to his design, and each one which appears in it, there are innumerable intermediate evanescences of sensation which no man felt but himself. These pleasures are in number according to the intenseness of his faculties and the quantity of his labour.

It is so in any particular pursuit, from the manufacturing of pins to the construction of philosophical systems. Every individual can exert that quantity of mind necessary to his wants and adapted to his situation; the quality of pleasure is nothing in the present question: for I think that we are mistaken concerning the gradations of human felicity. It does at first appear, that an astronomer rapt in abstraction, while he gazes on a star, must feel a more exquisite delight than a farmer who is conducting his team; or a poet experience a higher gratification in modulating verses than a trader in arranging sums. But the happiness of the ploughman and the trader may be as satisfactory as that of the astronomer and the poet. Our mind can only be conversant with those sensations which surround us, and possessing

the skill of managing them, we can form an artificial felicity; it is certain that what the soul does not feel no more affects it, than what the eye does not see. It is thus that the trader, habituated to humble pursuits, can never be unhappy because he is not the general of an army; for this idea of felicity he has never received. The philosopher who gives his entire years to the elevated pursuits of mind, is never unhappy because he is not in possession of an Indian opulence, for the idea of accumulating this exotic splendour has never entered the range of his combinations. Nature, an impartial mother, renders felicity as perfect in the school-boy who scourges his top, as in the astronomer who regulates his star. The thing contained can only be equal to the container; a full glass is as full as a full bottle; and a human soul may be as much satisfied in the lowest of human beings as in the highest.

In the progress of an individual pursuit, what philosophers call the associating or suggesting idea is ever busied, and in its beautiful effects genius is most deeply concerned; for besides those trains of thought the great artist falls into during his actual composition, a distinct habit accompanies real genius through life in the activity of his associating idea, when not at his work; it is at all times pressing and conducting his spontaneous thoughts, and every object which suggests them, however apparently trivial or unconnected towards itself, making what it wills its own, while instinctively it seems inattentive to whatever has no tendency to its own purposes.

Many peculiar advantages attend the cultivation of one master passion or occupation. In superior minds it is a sovereign that exiles others, and in inferior minds it enfeebles pernicious propensities. It may render us useful to our fellow citizens, and it imparts the most perfect independence to ourselves. It is observed by a great mathematician, that a geometrician would not be unhappy in a desert.

This unity of design, with a centripetal force, draws all the rays of our existence; and often, when accident has turned the mind firmly to one object, it has been discovered that its occupation is another name for happiness; for it is a mean of escaping from incongruous sensations. It secures us from the dark vacuity of soul, as well as from the whirlwind of ideas; reason itself is a passion, but a passion full of serenity.

It is however observable of those who have devoted themselves to an individual object, that its importance is incredibly enlarged to their sensations. Intense attention magnifies like a microscope; but it is possible to apologise for their apparent extravagance from the consideration, that they really observe combinations not perceived by others of inferior application. That this passion has been carried to a curious violence of affection, literary history affords numerous instances. In reading Dr. Burney's "Musical Travels," it would seem that music was the prime object of human life; Richardson the painter, in his treatise on his beloved art, closes all by affirming, that "*Raphael* is not only *equal*, but *superior* to a *Virgil*, or a *Livy*, or a *Thucydides*, or a *Homer!*" and that painting can reform our manners, increase our opulence, honour, and power. Denina, in his "Revolutions of Literature," tells us, that to excel in historical composition requires more ability than is exercised by the excelling masters of any other art; because it requires not only the same erudition, genius, imagination, and taste, necessary for a poet, a painter, or a philosopher, but the historian must also have some peculiar qualifications: this served as a prelude to his own history. Helvetius, an enthusiast in the fine arts and polite literature, has composed a poem on Happiness; and imagines that it consists in an exclusive love of the cultivation of letters and the arts. All this shows that the more intensely we attach ourselves to an individual object, the more numerous and the more perfect are our sensations; if we yield to the distracting variety of opposite pursuits with an equal passion, our soul is placed amid a continual shock of ideas, and happiness is lost by mistakes.

ON NOVELTY IN LITERATURE.

"All is said," exclaims the lively La Bruyère; but at the same moment, by his own admirable Reflections, confutes the dreary system he would establish. An opinion of the exhausted state of literature has been a popular prejudice of remote existence; and an unhappy idea of a wise ancient, who, even in his day, lamented that "of books there is no end," has been transcribed in many books. He who has critically examined any branch of literature has discovered how little of original invention is to be found even in the most excellent works. To add a little to his predecessors, satisfies the ambition of the first geniuses. The popular notion of literary novelty is an idea more fanciful than exact. Many are yet to learn that our admired originals are not such as they mistake them to be; that the plans of the most original performances have been borrowed; and that the thoughts of the most admired compositions are not wonderful discoveries, but only truths, which the ingenuity of the author, by arranging the intermediate and accessory ideas, has unfolded from that confused sentiment, which those experience who are not accustomed to think with depth,

or to discriminate with accuracy. This Novelty in Literature is, as Pope defines it,

"What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd."

Novelty, in its rigid acceptation, will not be found in any judicious production.

Voltaire looked on everything as imitation. He observes that the most original writers borrowed one from another, and says that the instruction we gather from books is like fire; we fetch it from our neighbours, kindle it at home, and communicate it to others, till it becomes the property of all. He traces some of the finest compositions to the fountain-head; and the reader smiles when he perceives that they have travelled in regular succession through China, India, Arabia, and Greece, to France and to England.

To the obscurity of time are the ancients indebted for that originality in which they are imagined to excel, but we know how frequently they accuse each other; and to have borrowed copiously from preceding writers was not considered criminal by such illustrious authors as Plato and Cicero. The Eneid of Virgil displays little invention in the incidents, for it unites the plan of the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Our own early writers have not more originality than modern genius may aspire to reach. To imitate and to rival the Italians and the French, formed their devotion. Chaucer, Gower, and Gawin Douglas, were all spirited imitators, and frequently only masterly translators. Spenser, the father of so many poets, is himself the child of the Ausonian Muse. Milton is incessantly borrowing from the poetry of his day. In the beautiful Masque of Comus he preserved all the circumsttances of the work he imitated. Tasso opened for him the Tartarean Gulf; the sublime description of the bridge may be found in Sadi, who borrowed it from the Turkish theology; the paradise of fools is a wild flower, transplanted from the wilderness of Ariosto. The rich poetry of Gray is a wonderful tissue, woven on the frames, and composed with the gold threads, of others. To Cervantes we owe Butler; and the united abilities of three great wits, in their Martinus Scriblerus, could find no other mode of conveying their powers but by imitating at once Don Quixote and Monsieur Oufle. Pope, like Boileau, had all the ancients and moderns in his pay; the contributions he levied were not the pillages of a bandit, but the taxes of a monarch. Swift is much indebted for the plans of his two very original performances: he owes the "Travels of Gulliver" to the "Voyages of Cyrano de Bergerac to the Sun and Moon;" a writer, who, without the acuteness of Swift, has wilder flashes of fancy; Joseph Warton has observed many of Swift's strokes in Bishop Godwin's "Man in the Moon," who, in his turn, must have borrowed his work from Cyrano. "The Tale of a Tub" is an imitation of such various originals, that they are too numerous here to mention. Wotton observed justly, that in many places, the author's wit is not his own. Dr. Feriar's "Essay on the Imitations of Sterne" might be considerably augmented. Such are the writers, however, who imitate, but remain inimitable!

Montaigne, with honest naïveté, compares his writings to a thread that binds the flowers of others; and that by incessantly pouring the waters of a few good old authors into his sieve, some drops fall upon his paper. The good old man elsewhere acquaints us with a certain stratagem of his own invention, consisting of his inserting whole sentences from the ancients, without acknowledgment, that the critics might blunder, by giving *nasardes* to Seneca and Plutarch, while they imagined they tweaked his nose. Petrarch, who is not the inventor of that tender poetry of which he is the model, and Boccaccio, called the father of Italian novels, have alike profited by a studious perusal of writers, who are now only read by those who have more curiosity than taste. Boiardo has imitated Pulci, and Ariosto, Boiardo. The madness of Orlando Furioso, though it wears, by its extravagance, a very original air, is only imitated from Sir Launcelot in the old romance of "Mort Arthur," with which, Warton observes, it agrees in every leading circumstance; and what is the Cardenio of Cervantes but the Orlando of Ariosto? Tasso has imitated the Iliad, and enriched his poem with episodes from the Eneid. It is curious to observe, that even Dante, wild and original as he appears, when he meets Virgil in the Inferno, warmly expresses his gratitude for the many fine passages for which he was indebted to his works, and on which he says he had "long meditated." Molière and La Fontaine are considered to possess as much originality as any of the French writers; yet the learned Menage calls Molière "un grand et habile picoreur;" and Boileau tells us, that La Fontaine borrowed his style and matter from Marot and Rabelais, and took his subjects from Boccaccio, Poggius, and Ariosto. Nor was the eccentric Rabelais the inventor of most of his burlesque narratives; and he is a very close imitator of Folengo, the inventor of the macaronic poetry, and not a little indebted to the old *Facezie* of the Italians. Indeed Marot, Villon, as well as those we have noticed, profited by the authors anterior to the age of Francis I. La Bruyère incorporates whole passages of Publius Syrus in his work, as the translator of the latter abundantly shows. To the "Turkish Spy" was Montesquieu beholden for his "Persian Letters,"

and a numerous crowd are indebted to Montesquieu. Corneille made a liberal use of Spanish literature; and the pure waters of Racine flowed from the fountains of Sophocles and Euripides.

This vein of imitation runs through the productions of our greatest authors. Vigneul de Marville compares some of the first writers to bankers who are rich with the assembled fortunes of individuals, and would be often ruined were they too hardly drawn on.

VERS DE SOCIÉTÉ.

PLINY, in an epistle to Tuscus, advises him to intermix among his severer studies the softening charms of poetry; and notices a species of poetical composition which merits critical animadversion. I shall quote Pliny in the language of his elegant translator. He says, "These pieces commonly go under the title of poetical amusements; but these amusements have sometimes gained as much reputation to their authors as works of a more serious nature. It is surprising how much the mind is entertained and enlivened by these little poetical compositions, as they turn upon subjects of gallantry, satire, tenderness, politeness, and everything, in short, that concerns life, and the affairs of the world."

This species of poetry has been carried to its utmost perfection by the French. It has been discriminated by them, from the mass of poetry, under the apt title of "*Poésies légères*," and sometimes it has been significantly called "*Vers de Société*." The French writers have formed a body of this fugitive poetry, which no European nation can rival; and to which both the language and genius appear to be greatly favourable.

The "*Poésies légères*" are not merely compositions of a light and gay turn, but are equally employed as a vehicle for tender and pathetic sentiment. They are never long, for they are consecrated to the amusement of society. The author appears to have composed them for his pleasure, not for his glory; and he charms his readers, because he seems careless of their approbation.

Every delicacy of sentiment must find its delicacy of expression, and every tenderness of thought must be softened by the tenderest tones. Nothing trite or trivial must enfeeble and chill the imagination; nor must the ear be denied its gratification, by a rough or careless verse. In these works nothing is pardoned; a word may disturb, a line may destroy the charm.

The passions of the poet may form the subjects of his verse. It is in these writings he delineates himself; he reflects his tastes, his desires, his humours, his amours, and even his defects. In other poems, the poet disappears under the feigned character he assumes; here alone he speaks, here he acts. He makes a confidant of the reader, interests him in his hopes and his sorrows; we admire the poet, and conclude with esteeming the man. The poem is the complaint of a lover, or a compliment to a patron, a vow of friendship, or a hymn of gratitude.

These poems have often, with great success, displayed pictures of manners; for here the poet colours the objects with all the hues of social life. Reflection must not be amplified, for these are pieces devoted to the fancy; a scene may be painted throughout the poem; a sentiment must be conveyed in a verse. In the "Grongar Hill" of Dyer, we discover some strokes which may serve to exemplify this criticism. The poet, contemplating the distant landscape, observes—

> "A step methinks may pass the stream,
> So little, distant dangers seem;
> So we mistake the future's face,
> Eyed through Hope's deluding glass."

It must not be supposed that, because these poems are concise, they are of easy production; a poet's genius may not be diminutive because his pieces are so; nor must we call them, as a fine sonnet has been called, a difficult trifle. A circle may be very small, yet it may be as mathematically beautiful and perfect as a larger one. To such compositions we may apply the observation of an ancient critic, that though a little thing gives perfection, yet perfection is not a little thing.

The poet must be alike polished by an intercourse with the world as with the studies of taste; one to whom labour is negligence, refinement a science, and art a nature.

Genius will not always be sufficient to impart that grace of amenity. Many of the French nobility, who cultivated poetry, have, therefore, oftener excelled in these poetical amusements than more professed poets. France once delighted in the amiable and ennobled names of Nivernois, Boufflers, and St. Aignan; they have not been considered as unworthy rivals of Chaulieu and Bernard, of Voltaire and Gresset.

All the minor odes of Horace, and the entire Anacreon, are compositions of this kind; effusions of the heart, and pictures of the imagination, which were produced in the convivial, the amatory, and the pensive hour. Our nation has not always been successful in these performances; they have not been kindred to its genius. With Charles II. something of a gayer and more airy taste was communicated to our poetry, but it was desultory and incorrect. Waller, both by his habits and his genius, was well adapted to excel in this lighter poetry; and he has often attained the perfection which the state of the language then permitted. Prior has a variety of sallies; but his humour is

sometimes gross, and his versification is sometimes embarrassed. He knew the value of these charming pieces, and he had drunk of this burgundy in the vineyard itself. He has some translations, and some plagiarisms; but some of his verses to Chloe are eminently airy and pleasing. A diligent selection from our fugitive poetry might, perhaps, present us with many of these minor poems; but the "*Vers de Société*" form a species of poetical composition which may still be employed with great success.

THE GENIUS OF MOLIERE.

THE genius of comedy not only changes with the age, but appears different among different people. Manners and customs not only vary among European nations, but are alike mutable from one age to another, even in the same people. These vicissitudes are often fatal to comic writers; our old school of comedy has been swept off the stage; and our present uniformity of manners has deprived our modern writers of those rich sources of invention when persons living more isolated, society was less monotonous; and Jonson and Shadwell gave us what they called "*the humours*,"—that is, the individual or particular characteristics of men.

But however tastes and modes of thinking may be inconstant, and customs and manners alter, at bottom the ground-work is Nature's, in every production of comic genius. A creative genius guided by an unerring instinct, though he draws after the contemporary models of society, will retain his pre-eminence beyond his own age and his own nation; what was temporary and local disappears, but what appertains to universal nature endures. The scholar dwells on the grotesque pleasantries of the sarcastic Aristophanes, though the Athenian manners, and his exotic personages, have long vanished.

MOLIERE was a creator in the *art of comedy*—and although his personages were the contemporaries of Louis the Fourteenth, and his manners, in the critical acceptation of the term, local and temporary, yet his admirable genius opened that secret path of Nature, which is so rarely found among the great names of the most literary nations. CERVANTES remains single in Spain; in England SHAKESPEARE is a consecrated name; and centuries may pass away before the French people shall witness another MOLIERE.

The history of this comic poet is the tale of powerful genius creating itself amidst the most adverse elements. We have the progress of that self-education which struck out an untried path of its own, from the time Molière had not yet acquired his art, to the glorious days when he gave his country a Plautus in his farce, a Terence in his composition, and a Menander in his moral truths. But the difficulties overcome, and the disappointments incurred, his modesty and his confidence, and, what was not less extraordinary, his own domestic life in perpetual conflict with his character, open a more strange career, in some respects, than has happened to most others of the high order of his genius.

It was long the fate of Molière to experience that restless importunity of genius which feeds on itself, till it discovers the pabulum it seeks. Molière not only suffered that tormenting impulse, but it was accompanied by the unhappiness of a mistaken direction. And this has been the lot of some who for many years have thus been lost to themselves and to the public.

A man born among the obscure class of the people, thrown among the itinerant companies of actors, for France had not yet a theatre, occupied to his last hours by too devoted a management of his own dramatic corps; himself, too, an original actor in the characters by himself created; with no better models of composition than the Italian farces *all' improvista*, and whose fantastic gaiety he, to the last, loved too well; becomes the personal favourite of the most magnificent monarch, and the intimate of the most refined circles. Thoughtful observer of these new scenes and new personages, he sports with the affected *précieuses* and the fluttering *marquises*, as with the *naïve* ridiculousness of the *bourgeois*, and the wild pride and egotism of the *parvenus*; and with more profound designs and a hardier hand, unmasks the impostures of false *pretenders* in all professions. His scenes, such was their verity, seem but the reflections of his reminiscences. His fertile facility when touching on transient follies; his wide comprehension, and his moralising vein, in his more elevated comedy, display, in this painter of man, the poet and the philosopher, and, above all, the great moral satirist. Molière has shown that the most successful reformer of the manners of a people is a great comic poet.

The youth *Pocquelin*—this was his family name—was designed by the *tapissier*, his father, to be the heir of the hereditary honours of an ancient standing, which had maintained the Pocquelins through four or five generations, by the articles of a furnishing upholsterer. His grandfather was a haunter of the small theatres of that day, and the boy often accompanied this venerable critic of the family to his favourite recreations. The actors were usually more excellent than their pieces; some had carried the mimetic art to the perfection of eloquent gesticulation. In these loose scenes of inartificial and burlesque pieces was the genius of Molière cradled and nursed. The

changeful scenes of the *Théâtre de Bourgogne* deeply busied the boy's imagination, to the great detriment of the *tapisserie* of all the Pocquelins.

The father groaned, the grandfather clapped, the boy remonstrated, till, at fourteen years of age, he was consigned, as "un mauvais sujet," (so his father qualified him,) to a college of the Jesuits at Paris, where the author of the "Tartuffe" passed five years, studying—for the bar!

Philosophy and logic were waters which he deeply drank; and sprinklings of his college studies often pointed the satire of his more finished comedies. To ridicule false learning and false taste, one must be intimate with the true.

On his return to the metropolis, the old humour broke out at the representation of the inimitable Scaramouch of the Italian theatre. The irresistible passion drove him from his law studies, and cast young Pocquelin among a company of amateur actors, whose fame soon enabled them not to play gratuitously. Pocquelin was the manager and the modeller, for, under his studious eye, this company were induced to imitate Nature with the simplicity the poet himself wrote.

The prejudices of the day, both civil and religious, had made these private theatres, no great national theatre yet existing, the resource only of the idler, the dissipated, and even of the unfortunate in society. The youthful adventurer affectionately offered a free admission to the dear Pocquelins. They rejected their *entrées* with horror, and sent their genealogical tree, drawn afresh, to shame the truant who had wantoned into the luxuriance of genius. To save the honour of the parental upholsterers, Pocquelin concealed himself under the immortal name of Molière.

The future creator of French comedy had now passed his thirtieth year, and as yet his reputation was confined to his own dramatic corps—a pilgrim in the caravan of ambulatory comedy. He had provided several temporary novelties. Boileau regretted the loss of one, "Le Docteur Amoureux;" and in others we detect the abortive conceptions of some of his future pieces. The severe judgment of Molière suffered his skeletons to perish, but when he had discovered the art of comic writing, with equal discernment he resuscitated them.

Not only had Molière not yet discovered the true bent of his genius, but, still more unfortunate, he had as greatly mistaken it as when he proposed turning *avocat*, for he imagined that his most suitable character was tragic. He wrote a tragedy, and he acted in a tragedy; the tragedy he composed was condemned at Bordeaux; the mortified poet flew to Grenoble; still the unlucky tragedy haunted his fancy; he looked on it with paternal eyes, in which there were tears. Long after, when Racine, a youth, offered him a very unactable tragedy, Molière presented him with his own:—"Take this, for I am convinced that the subject is highly tragic, notwithstanding my failure." The great dramatic poet of France opened his career by recomposing the condemned tragedy of the comic wit, in "La Thébaïde." In the illusion that he was a great tragic actor, deceived by his own susceptibility, though his voice denied the tones of passion, he acted in one of Corneille's tragedies, and quite allayed the alarm of a rival company on the announcement. It was not, however, so when the author-actor vivified one of his own native personages; then, inimitably comic, every new representation seemed to be a new creation.

It is a remarkable feature, though not perhaps a singular one, in the character of this great comic writer, that he was one of the most serious of men, and even of a melancholic temperament. One of his lampooners wrote a satirical comedy on the comic poet, where he figures as "Molière hypochondre." Boileau, who knew him intimately, happily characterised Molière as *le Contemplateur*. This deep pensiveness is revealed in his physiognomy.

The genius of Molière, long undiscovered by himself, in its first attempts in a higher walk did not move alone; it was crutched by imitation, and it often deigned to plough with another's heifer. He copied whole scenes from Italian comedies and plots from Italian novelists: his sole merit was their improvement. The great comic satirist, who hereafter was to people the stage with a dramatic crowd who were to live on to posterity, had not yet struck at that secret vein of originality—the fairy treasure which one day was to cast out such a prodigality of invention. His two first comedies, "L'Etourdi" and "Le Dépit Amoureux," which he had only ventured to bring out in a provincial theatre, were grafted on Italian and Spanish comedy. Nothing more original offered to his imagination than the Roman, the Italian, and the Spanish drama; the cunning adroit slave of Terence; the tricking, bustling *Gracioso* of modern Spain; old fathers, the dupes of some scape-grace, or of their own senile follies, with lovers sighing at cross-purposes. The germ of his future powers may, indeed, be discovered in these two comedies, for insensibly to himself he had fallen into some scenes of natural simplicity. In "L'Etourdi," Mascarille, "le roi des serviteurs," which Molière himself admirably personated, is one of those defunct characters of the Italian comedy no longer existing in society; yet, like our Touchstone, but infinitely richer, this new ideal personage still delights by the fertility of his expedients and his perpetual and vigorous gaiety. In "Le Dépit Amoureux" is the

exquisite scene of the quarrel and reconciliation of the lovers. In this fine scene, though perhaps but an amplification of the well-known ode of Horace, *Donec gratus eram tibi*, Molière consulted his own feelings, and betrayed his future genius.

It was after an interval of three or four years that the provincial celebrity of these comedies obtained a representation at Paris; their success was decisive. This was an evidence of public favour which did not accompany Molière's more finished productions, which were so far unfortunate that they were more intelligible to the few; in fact, the first comedies of Molière were not written above the popular taste; the spirit of true comedy, in a profound knowledge of the heart of man, and in the delicate discriminations of individual character, was yet unknown. Molière was satisfied to excel his predecessors, but he had not yet learned his art.

The rising poet was now earnestly sought after; a more extended circle of society now engaged his contemplative habits. He looked around on living scenes no longer through the dim spectacles of the old comedy, and he projected a new species, which was no longer to depend on its conventional grotesque personages and its forced incidents; he aspired to please a more critical audience, by making his dialogue the conversation of society, and his characters its portraits.

Introduced to the literary coterie of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, a new view opened on the favoured poet. To occupy a seat in this envied circle was a distinction in society. The professed object of this reunion of nobility and literary persons, at the hôtel of the marchioness of Rambouillet, was to give a higher tone to all France, by the cultivation of the language, the intellectual refinement of their compositions, and last, but not least, to inculcate the extremest delicacy of manners. The recent civil dissensions had often violated the urbanity of the court, and a grossness prevailed in conversation which offended the scrupulous. This critical circle was composed of both sexes. They were to be the arbiters of taste, the legislators of criticism, and, what was less tolerable, the models of genius. No work was to be stamped into currency which bore not the mint-mark of the hôtel.

In the annals of fashion and literature, no coterie has presented a more instructive and amusing exhibition of the abuses of learning, and the aberrations of ill-regulated imaginations, than the Hôtel de Rambouillet, by its ingenious absurdities. Their excellent design to refine the language, the manners, and even morality itself, branched out into every species of false refinement; their science ran into trivial pedantries, their style into a fantastic jargon, and their spiritualising delicacy into the very puritanism of prudery. Their frivolous distinction between the mind and the heart, which could not always be made to go together, often perplexed them as much as their own jargon, which was not always intelligible, even to the initiated. The French Academy is said to have originated in the first meetings of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; and it is probable that some sense and taste, in its earliest days, may have visited this society, for we do not begin such refined follies without some show of reason.

The local genius of the hôtel was feminine, though the most glorious men of the literature of France were among its votaries. The great magnet was the famed Mademoiselle Scudery, whose voluminous romances were their code; and it is supposed these tomes preserve some of their lengthened *conversasiones*. In the novel system of gallantry of this great inventor of amorous and metaphysical "twaddle," the ladies were to be approached as beings nothing short of celestial paragons; they were addressed in a language not to be found in any dictionary but their own, and their habits were more fantastic than their language: a sort of domestic chivalry formed their etiquette. Their baptismal names were to them profane, and their assumed ones were drawn from the folio romances — those Bibles of love. At length all ended in a sort of Freemasonry of gallantry, which had its graduated orders, and whoever was not admitted into the mysteries was not permitted to prolong his existence — that is, his residence among them. The apprenticeship of the craft was to be served under certain *Introducers to Ruelles*.

Their card of invitation was either a rondeau or an enigma, which served as a subject to open conversation. The lady received her visitors reposing on that throne of beauty, a bed placed in an alcove; the toilet was magnificently arranged. The space between the bed and the wall was called the *Ruelle*, the diminutive of *la Rue*; and in this narrow street, or "Fop's alley," walked the favoured. But the chevalier who was graced by the honorary title of *l'Alcoviste*, was at once master of the household and master of the ceremonies. His character is pointedly defined by St. Evremond, as "a lover whom the *Précieuse* is to love without enjoyment, and to enjoy in good earnest her husband with aversion." The scene offered no indecency to such delicate minds, and much less the impassioned style which passed between *les chères*, as they called themselves. Whatever offered an idea, of what their jargon denominated *charnelle*, was treason and exile. Years passed ere the hand of the elected maiden was kissed by its martyr. The celebrated Julia

d'Angennes was beloved by the duke de Montausier, but fourteen years elapsed ere she would yield a "yes." When the faithful Julia was no longer blooming, the Alcoviste duke gratefully took up the remains of her beauty.

Their more curious project was the reform of the style of conversation, to purify its grossness, and invent novel terms for familiar objects. Ménage drew up a "Petition of the Dictionaries," which, by their severity of taste, had nearly become superannuated. They succeeded better with the *marchandes des modes* and the jewellers, furnishing a vocabulary excessively *précieuse*, by which people bought their old wares with new names. At length they were so successful in their neology, that with great difficulty they understood one another. It is, however, worth observation, that the orthography invented by the *précieuses*, who, for their convenience, rejected all the redundant letters in words, was adopted and is now used; and their pride of exclusiveness in society introduced the singular term *s'encanailler*, to describe a person who haunted low company, while their morbid purity had ever on their lips the word *obscénité*, terms which Molière ridicules, but whose expressiveness has preserved them in the language.

Ridiculous as some of these extravagances now appear to us, they had been so closely interwoven with the elegance of the higher ranks, and so intimately associated with genius and literature, that the veil of fashion consecrated almost the mystical society, since we find among its admirers the most illustrious names of France.

Into this elevated and artificial circle of society, our youthful and unsophisticated poet was now thrown, with a mind not vitiated by any prepossessions of false taste, studious of nature and alive to the ridiculous. But how was the comic genius to strike at the follies of his illustrious friends—to strike, but not to wound? A provincial poet and actor to enter hostilely into the sacred precincts of these Exclusives? Tormented by his genius, Molière produced "Les Précieuses Ridicules," but admirably parried, in his preface, any application to them, by averring that it was aimed at their imitators—their spurious mimics in the country. The "Précieuses Ridicules" was acted in the presence of the assembled Hôtel de Rambouillet with immense applause. A central voice from the pit, anticipating the host of enemies and the fame of the reformer of comedy, exclaimed, "Take courage, Molière, this is true comedy." The learned Ménage was the only member of the society who had the good sense to detect the drift; he perceived the snake in the grass. "We must now," said this sensible pedant (in a remote allusion to the fate of idolatry and the introduction of Christianity) to the poetical pedant Chapelain, "follow the counsel which St. Rémi gave to Clovis: we must burn all that we adored, and adore what we have burned." The success of the comedy was universal; the company doubled their prices; the country gentry flocked to witness the marvellous novelty, which far exposed that false taste, that romance-impertinence, and that sickly affectation, which had long disturbed the quiet of families. Cervantes had not struck more adroitly at Spanish rhodomontade.

At this universal reception of the "Précieuses Ridicules," Molière, it is said, exclaimed,—"I need no longer study Plautus and Terence, nor poach in the fragments of Menander; I have only to study the world." It may be doubtful whether the great comic satirist at that moment caught the sudden revelation of his genius, as he did subsequently in his "Tartuffe," his "Misanthrope," his "Bourgeois Gentilhomme," and others. The "Précieuses Ridicules" was the germ of his more elaborate "Femmes Savantes," which was not produced till after an interval of twelve years.

Molière returned to his old favourite *canevas*, or plots of Italian farces and novels, and Spanish comedies, which, being always at hand, furnished comedies of intrigue. "L'Ecole des Maris" is an inimitable model of this class.

But comedies which derive their chief interest from the ingenious mechanism of their plots, however poignant the delight of the artifice of the *denouement*, are somewhat like an epigram, once known the brilliant point is blunted by repetition. This is not the fate of those representations of men's actions, passions, and manners, in the more enlarged sphere of human nature, where an eternal interest is excited, and will charm on the tenth repetition.

No! Molière had not yet discovered his true genius; he was not yet emancipated from his old seductions. A rival company was reputed to have the better actors for tragedy, and Molière resolved to compose an heroic drama on the passion of jealousy, a favourite one on which he was incessantly ruminating. "Don Garcie de Navarre, ou Le Prince Jaloux," the hero personated by himself, terminated by the hisses of the audience.

The fall of the "Prince Jaloux" was nearly fatal to the tender reputation of the poet and the actor. The world became critical: the marquises, and the précieuses, and recently the bourgeois, who was sore from "Sganarelle, ou Le Cocu Imaginaire," were up in arms; and the rival theatre maliciously raised the halloo, flattering themselves that the comic genius of their dreaded rival would be extinguished by the ludicrous convulsed hiccough to which Molière was liable in

his tragic tones, but which he adroitly managed in his comic parts.

But the genius of Molière was not to be daunted by cabals, nor even injured by his own imprudence. "Le Prince Jaloux" was condemned in February 1661, and the same year produced "L'Ecole des Maris" and "Les Facheux." The happy genius of the poet opened on his Zoiluses a series of dramatic triumphs.

Foreign critics, Tiraboschi and Schlegel, have depreciated the Frenchman's invention, by insinuating, that were all that Molière borrowed taken from him, little would remain of his own. But they were not aware of his dramatic creation, even when he appropriated the slight inventions of others; they have not distinguished the eras of the genius of Molière, and the distinct classes of his comedies. Molière had the art of amalgamating many distinct inventions of others into a single inimitable whole. Whatever might be the herbs and the reptiles thrown into the mystical caldron, the incantation of genius proved to be truly magical.

Facility and fecundity may produce inequality, but when a man of genius works, they are imbued with a raciness which the anxious diligence of inferior minds can never yield. Shakespeare, probably, poured forth many scenes in this spirit. The multiplicity of the pieces of Molière, their different merits, and their distinct classes—all written within the space of twenty years—display, if any poet ever did, this wonder-working faculty. The truth is, that few of his comedies are finished works; he never satisfied himself, even in his most applauded productions. Necessity bound him to furnish novelties for his theatre; he rarely printed any work. "Les Fâcheux," an admirable series of scenes, in three acts, and in verse, was "planned, written, rehearsed, and represented in a single fortnight." Many of his dramatic effusions were precipitated on the stage; the humorous scenes of "Monsieur de Pourceaugnac" were thrown out to enliven a royal fête.

This versatility and felicity of composition made everything, with Molière, a subject for comedy. He invented two novelties, such as the stage had never before witnessed. Instead of a grave defence from the malice of his critics, and the flying gossip of the court circle, Molière found out the art of congregating the public to "The Quarrels of Authors." He dramatised his critics. In a comedy without a plot, and in scenes which seemed rather spoken than written, and with characters more real than personated, he displayed his genius by collecting whatever had been alleged to depreciate it; and "La Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes" is still a delightful production. This singular drama resembles the sketch-book of an artist, the *croquis* of portraits,—the loose hints of thoughts, many of which we discover were more fully delineated in his subsequent pieces. With the same rapid conception, he laid hold of his embarrassments to furnish dramatic novelties as expeditiously as the king required. Louis XIV. was himself no indifferent critic, and more than once suggested an incident or a character to his favourite poet. In "L'Impromptu de Versailles," Molière appears in his own person, and in the midst of his whole company, with all the irritable impatience of a manager who had no piece ready. Amidst this green-room bustle, Molière is advising, reprimanding, and imploring his "ladies and gentlemen." The characters in this piece are, in fact, the actors themselves, who appear under their own names; and Molière himself reveals many fine touches of his own poetical character, as well as his managerial. The personal pleasantries on his own performers, and the hints for plots, and the sketches of character which the poet incidentally throws out, form a perfect dramatic novelty. Some of these he himself subsequently adopted, and others have been followed up by some dramatists without rivalling Molière. The Figaro of Beaumarchais is a descendant of the Mascarille of Molière; but the glory of rivalling Molière was reserved for our own stage. Sheridan's "Critic, or A Tragedy rehearsed," is a congenial dramatic satire with these two pieces of Molière.

The genius of Molière had now stepped out of the restricted limits of the old comedy; he now looked on the moving world with other eyes, and he pursued the ridiculous in society. These fresher studies were going on at all hours, and every object was contemplated with a view to comedy. His most vital characters have been traced to living originals, and some of his most ludicrous scenes had occurred in reality before they delighted the audience. Monsieur Jourdain had expressed his astonishment, "qu'il faisait de la prose," in the Count de Soissons, one of the uneducated noblemen devoted to the chase. The memorable scene between Trissotin and Vadius, their mutual compliments terminating in their mutual contempt, had been rehearsed by their respective authors, the Abbé Cottin and Ménage. The stultified booby of Limoges, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, and the mystified millionnaire, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, were copied after life, as was *Sganarelle*, in "Le Médecin malgré lui." The portraits in that gallery of dramatic paintings, "Le Misanthrope," have names inscribed under them; and the immortal *Tartuffe* was a certain Bishop of Autun. No dramatist has conceived with greater variety the female character; the women of Molière have a distinctness of feature,

and are touched with a freshness of feeling. Molière studied nature, and his comic humour is never checked by that unnatural wit where the poet, the more he discovers himself, the farther he removes himself from the personage of his creation. The quickening spell which hangs over the dramas of Molière is this close attention to nature, wherein he greatly resembles our Shakespeare, for all springs from its source. His unobtrusive genius never occurs to us in following up his characters, and a whole scene leaves on our mind a complete but imperceptible effect.

The style of Molière has often been censured by the fastidiousness of his native critics, as *bas* and *du style familier*. This does not offend the foreigner, who is often struck by its simplicity and vigour. Molière preferred the most popular and naive expressions, as well as the most natural incidents, to a degree which startled the morbid delicacy of fashion and fashionable critics. He had frequent occasions to resist their petty remonstrances; and whenever Molière introduced an incident, or made an allusion of which he knew the truth, and which with him had a settled meaning, this master of human life trusted to his instinct and his art.

This pure and simple taste, ever rare at Paris, was the happy portion of the genius of this Frenchman. Hence he delighted to try his farcical pieces, for we cannot imagine that they were his more elevated comedies, on his old maid-servant. This maid, probably, had a keen relish for comic humour, for once when Molière read to her the comedy of another writer as his own, she soon detected the trick, declaring that it could not be her master's. Hence too our poet invited even children to be present on such rehearsals, and at certain points would watch their emotions. Hence too, in his character of manager, he taught his actors to study nature. An actress, apt to speak freely, told him, "You torment us all: but you never speak to my husband." This man, originally a candle-snuffer, was a perfect child of nature, and acted the Thomas Diaforius, in "Le Malade Imaginaire." Molière replied, "I should be sorry to say a word to him; I should spoil his acting. Nature has provided him with better lessons to perform his parts than any which I could give him." We may imagine Shakespeare thus addressing his company, had the poet been also the manager.

A remarkable incident in the history of the genius of Molière is the frequent recurrence of the poet to the passion of jealousy. The "jaundice in the lover's eye," he has painted with every tint of his imagination. "The green-eyed monster" takes all shapes, and is placed in every position. Solemn, or gay, or satirical, he sometimes appears in agony, but often seems to make its "trifles light as air," only ridiculous as a source of consolation. Was "Le Contemplateur" comic in his melancholy, or melancholy in his comic humour?

The truth is, that the poet himself had to pass through those painful stages which he has dramatised. The domestic life of Molière was itself very dramatic; it afforded Goldoni a comedy of five acts, to reveal the secrets of the family circle of Molière; and l'Abbate Chiari, an Italian novelist and playwright, has taken for a comic subject, "Molière the Jealous Husband."

The French, in their "petite morale" on conjugal fidelity, appear so tolerant as to leave little sympathy for the real sufferer. Why should they else have treated domestic jealousy as a foible for ridicule, rather than a subject for deep passion? Their tragic drama exhibits no Othello, nor their comedy a Kitely, or a "Suspicious Husband." Molière, while his own heart was the victim, conformed to the national taste, by often placing the object on its comic side. Domestic jealousy is a passion which admits of a great diversity of subjects, from the tragic or the pathetic, to the absurd and the ludicrous. We have them all in Molière. Molière often was himself "Le Cocu Imaginaire;" he had been in the position of the guardian in "L'Ecole des Maris." Like Arnolphe, in "L'Ecole des Femmes," he had taken on himself to rear a young wife who played the same part, though with less innocence; and, like the "Misanthrope," where the scene between Alceste and Celimène is "une des plus fortes qui existent au théâtre," he was deeply entangled in the wily cruelties of scornful coquetry, and we know that at times he suffered in "the hell of lovers" the torments of his own "Jealous Prince."

When this poet cast his fate with a troop of comedians, as the manager, and whom he never would abandon, when at the height of his fortune, could he avoid accustoming himself to the relaxed habits of that gay and sorrowful race, who, "of imagination all compact," too often partake of the passions they inspire in the scene? The first actress, Madame Béjard, boasted that, with the exception of the poet, she had never dispensed her personal favours but to the aristocracy. The constancy of Molière was interrupted by another actress, Du Parc; beautiful but insensible, she only tormented the poet, and furnished him with some severe lessons for the coquetry of his Celimène, in "Le Misanthrope." The facility of the transition of the tender passion had more closely united the susceptible poet to Mademoiselle de Brie. But Madame Béjard, not content to be the chief actress, and to hold her partnership in "the properties," to retain her ancient authority over the poet, introduced, suddenly, a blushing

daughter, some say a younger sister, who had hitherto resided at Avignon, and who she declared was the offspring of the count of Modena, by a secret marriage. Armande Béjard soon attracted the paternal attentions of the poet. She became the secret idol of his retired moments, while he fondly thought that he could mould a young mind, in its innocence, to his own sympathies. The mother and the daughter never agreed. Armande sought his protection; and one day rushing into his study, declared that she would marry her friend. The elder Béjard freely consented to avenge herself on De Brie. De Brie was indulgent, though "the little creature," she observed, was to be yoked to one old enough to be her father. Under the same roof were now heard the voices of the three females, and Molière meditating scenes of feminine jealousies.

Molière was fascinated by his youthful wife; her lighter follies charmed: two years riveted the connubial chains. Molière was a husband who was always a lover. The actor on the stage was the very man he personated. Mademoiselle Molière, as she was called by the public, was the Lucile in "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme." With what fervour the poet feels her neglect! with what eagerness he defends her from the animadversions of the friend who would have dissolved the spell!

The poet was doomed to endure more poignant sorrows than slights. Mademoiselle had the art of persuading Molière that he was only his own "cocu imaginaire;" but these domestic embarrassments multiplied. Mademoiselle, reckless of the distinguished name she bore, while she gratified her personal vanity by a lavish expenditure, practised that artful coquetry which attracted a crowd of loungers. Molière found no repose in his own house, and retreated to a country-house, where, however, his restless jealousy often drove him back to scenes which he trembled to witness. At length came the last argument of outraged matrimony—he threatened confinement. To prevent a public rupture, Molière consented to live under the same roof, and only to meet at the theatre. Weak only in love, however divided from his wife, Molière remained her perpetual lover. He said, in confidence, "I am born with every disposition to tenderness. When I married, she was too young to betray any evil inclinations. My studies were devoted to her, but I soon discovered her indifference. I ascribed it to her temper; her foolish passion for Count Guiche made too much noise to leave me even this apparent tranquillity. I resolved to live with her as an honourable man, whose reputation does not depend on the bad conduct of his wife. My kindness has not changed her, but my compassion has increased. Those who have not experienced these delicate emotions have never truly loved. In her absence her image is before me; in her presence, I am deprived of all reflection; I have no longer eyes for her defects; I only view her amiable. Is not this the last extreme of folly? And are you not surprised that I, reasoning as I do, am only sensible of the weakness which I cannot throw off?"

Few men of genius have left in their writings deeper impressions of their personal feelings than Molière. With strong passions in a feeble frame, he had duped his imagination that, like another Pygmalion, he would create a woman by his own art. In silence and agony he tasted the bitter fruits of the disordered habits of the life of a comedian, a manager, and a poet. His income was splendid; but he himself was a stranger to dissipation. He was a domestic man, of a pensive and even melancholy temperament. Silent and reserved, unless in conversation with that more intimate circle whose literature aided his genius, or whose friendship consoled for his domestic disturbances, his habits were minutely methodical; the strictest order was observed throughout his establishment; the hours of dinner, of writing, of amusement, were allotted, and the slightest derangement in his own apartment excited a morbid irritability which would interrupt his studies for whole days.

Who, without this tale of Molière, could conjecture, that one skilled in the workings of our nature would have ventured on the perilous experiment of equalising sixteen years against forty—weighing roses against grey locks—to convert a wayward coquette, through her capricious womanhood, into an attached wife? Yet, although Mademoiselle could cherish no personal love for the intellectual being, and hastened to change the immortal name she bore for a more terrestrial man, she seems to have been impressed by a perfect conviction of his creative genius. When the Archbishop of Paris, in the pride of prelacy, refused the rites of sepulture to the corpse of Molière THE ACTOR, it was her voice which reminded the world of Molière THE POET, exclaiming—"Have they denied a grave to the man to whom Greece would have raised an altar!"

THE SENSIBILITY OF RACINE.

THE Memoirs of the poet Racine, composed by his son, who was himself no contemptible poet, may be classed among those precious pieces of biography so delightful to the philosopher who studies human nature, and the literary man whose curiosity is interested in the history of his republic. Such works are rare, and rank in merit next to autobiographies. Such biographical sketches,

like Boswell's of Johnson, contain what we often regret is wanting in the more regular life of a professed biographer. These desultory memoirs interest by their warmth, their more personal acquaintance with the hero, and abound with those minuter strokes which give so much life to the individual character.

The prominent feature in the character of Racine was an excessive tenderness of feeling; his profound sensibility even to its infirmity, the tears which would cover his face, and the agony in his heart, was perhaps national. But if this sensibility produced at times the softest emotions, if it made him the poet of lovers, and even the poet of imagination, it also rendered him too feelingly alive to criticism, it embittered his days with too keen a perception of the domestic miseries which all men must alike undergo.

During a dramatic performance at St. Cyr, the youthful representative of Esther suddenly forgot her part; the agitated poet exclaimed, "Oh, mademoiselle, you are ruining my piece!" Terrified at this reprimand, the young actress wept; the poet flew to her, wiped away her tears, and with contagious sympathy shed tears himself. "I do not hesitate," says Louis Racine, "to relate such minute circumstances, because this facility of shedding tears shows the goodness of the heart, according to the observation of the ancients—

ἀγαθοὶ δ' ἀριδάκρυες ἄνδρες."

This morbid state of feelings made his whole literary life uneasy; unjust criticism affected him as much as the most poignant, and there was nothing he dreaded more than that his son should become a writer of tragedies. "I will not dissimulate," he says, addressing his son, "that in the heat of composition we are not sometimes pleased with ourselves; but you may believe me, when the day after we look over our work, we are astonished not to find that excellence we admired in the evening; and when we reflect that even what we find good ought to be still better, and how distant we are still from perfection, we are discouraged and dissatisfied. Besides all this, although the approbation I have received has been very flattering, the least adverse criticism, even miserable as it might be, has always occasioned me more vexation than all the praise I received could give me pleasure." And, again, he endeavours to impress on him that the favour he received from the world he owed not to his verses. "Do not imagine that they are my verses that attract all these kindnesses. Corneille composes verses a hundred times finer than mine, but no one regards him. His verses are only applauded from the mouths of the actors. I do not tire men of the world by reciting my works; I never allude to them; I endeavour to amuse them with matters which please them. My talent in their company is, not to make them feel that I have any genius, but to show them that they possess some themselves. When you observe the duke pass several hours with me, you would be surprised, were you present, that he frequently quits me without my having uttered three words; but gradually I put him in a humour of chatting, and he leaves me more satisfied with himself than with me." When Rochefoucault said that Boileau and Racine had only one kind of genius, and could only talk about their own poetry, it is evident that the observation should not have extended to Racine, however it might to Boileau. It was Racine's excessive sensibility which made him the finest dramatic reciter. The celebrated actress Chammelay, the heroine of his tragedies, had no genius whatever for the stage, but she had beauty, voice, and memory. Racine taught her first to comprehend the verses she was going to recite, showed her the appropriate gesture, and gave her the variable tones, which he even sometimes noted down. His pupil, faithful to her lessons, though a mere actress of art, on the stage seemed inspired by passion; and as she, thus formed and fashioned, naturally only played thus effectively in the dramas of her preceptor, it was supposed that love for the poet inspired the actress.

When Racine read aloud he diffused his own enthusiasm; once with Boileau and Nicole, amid a literary circle, they talked of Sophocles, whom Racine greatly admired, but from whom he had never dared to borrow a tragic subject. Taking up a Greek Sophocles, and translating the Œdipus, the French poet became so deeply imbued with the Greek tragedian, that his auditors caught all the emotions of terror and pity. "I have seen," says one of those auditors, "our best pieces represented by our best actors, but never anything approached the agitation which then came over us; and to this distant day I have never lost the recollection of Racine, with the volume in his hand, full of emotion, and we all breathlessly pressing around him."

It was the poet's sensibility that urged him to make the most extraordinary sacrifice that ever poet made; he wished to get rid entirely of that poetical fame to which he owed everything, and which was at once his pleasure, his pride, and his property. His education had been a religious one, in the Port-Royal; but when Nicole, one of that illustrious confraternity, with undistinguishing fanaticism, had once asserted that all dramatic writers were public poisoners of souls, Racine, in the pride and strength of his genius, had eloquently repelled the denouncement. But now, having yet only half run his unrivalled course, he

turned aside, relinquished its glory, repented of his success, and resolved to write no more tragedies. He determined to enter into the austere order of the Chartreux; but his confessor, more rational than his penitent, assured him that a character so feeling as his own, and so long accustomed to the world, could not endure that terrible solitude. He advised him to marry a woman of a serious turn, and that little domestic occupations would withdraw him from the passion he seemed most to dread, that of writing verses.

The marriage of Racine was an act of penance —neither love nor interest had any share in the union. His wife was a good sort of woman, but perhaps the most insensible of her sex; and the properest person in the world to mortify the passion of literary glory, and the momentary exultation of literary vanity. It is scarcely credible, but most certainly true, since her own son relates the fact, that the wife of Racine had neither seen, acted, nor ever read, nor desired to read, the tragedies which had rendered her husband so celebrated throughout Europe; she had only learned some of their titles in conversation. She was as insensible to fortune as to fame. One day, when Racine returned from Versailles, with the princely gift from Louis XIV. of a purse of 1000 louis, he hastened to embrace his wife, and to show her the treasure. But she was full of trouble, for one of the children for two days had not studied! "We will talk of this another time," exclaimed the poet; "at present let us be happy." But she insisted he ought instantly to reprimand this child, and continued her complaints; while Boileau in astonishment paced to and fro, perhaps thinking of his Satire on Women, and exclaiming, "What insensibility! Is it possible, that a purse of 1000 louis is not worth a thought!" This stoical apathy did not arise in Madame Racine from the grandeur, but the littleness, of her mind. Her prayer-books and her children were the sole objects that interested this good woman. Racine's sensibility was not mitigated by his marriage; domestic sorrows weighed heavily on his spirits; when the illness of his children agitated him, he sometimes exclaimed, "Why did I expose myself to all this? Why was I persuaded not to be a Chartreux?" His letters to his children are those of a father and a friend; kind exhortations or pathetic reprimands; he enters into the most domestic detail, while he does not conceal from them the mediocrity of their fortune. "Had you known him in his family," said Louis Racine, "you would be more alive to his poetical character, you would then know why his verses are always so full of sentiment. He was never more pleased than when, permitted to be absent from the court, he could come among us to pass a few days. Even in the presence of strangers he dared to be a father, and used to join us in our sports. I well remember our processions in which my sisters were the clergy, I the rector, and the author of Athaliah, chanting with us, carried the cross."

At length this infirm sensibility abridged his days. He was naturally of a melancholic temperament, apt to dwell on objects which occasion pain, rather than on those which exhilarate. Louis Racine observes that his character resembled Cicero's description of himself, more inclined to dread unfortunate events, than to hope for happy ones; *semper magis adversos rerum exitus metuens quam sperans secundos.* In the last incident of his life his extreme sensibility led him to imagine as present a misfortune which might never have occurred.

Madame de Maintenon, one day in conversation with the poet, alluded to the misery of the people. Racine observed it was the usual consequence of long wars; the subject was animating, and he entered into it with all that enthusiasm peculiar to himself. Madame de Maintenon was charmed with his eloquent effusion, and requested him to give her his observations in writing, assuring him they should not go out of her hand. She was reading his memoir when the king entered her apartment; he took it up, and after having looked over a few pages, he inquired with great quickness who was the author. She replied it was a secret; but the king was peremptory, and the author was named. The king asked with great dissatisfaction, "Is it because he writes the most perfect verses, that he thinks that he is able to become a statesman?"

Madame de Maintenon told the poet all that had passed, and declined to receive his visits for the present. Racine was shortly after attacked with violent fever. In the languor of recovery he addressed Madame de Maintenon to petition to have his pension freed from some new tax; and he added an apology for his presumption in suggesting the cause of the miseries of the people, with an humiliation that betrays the alarms that existed n his mind. The letter is too long to transcribe, but it is a singular instance how genius can degrade itself when it has placed all its felicity on the varying smiles of those we call the great. Well might his friend Boileau, who had nothing of his sensibility nor imagination, exclaim, with his good sense, of the court:—

"Quel séjour étranger, et pour vous et pour moi!"

Racine afterwards saw Madame de Maintenon walking in the gardens of Versailles; she drew aside into a retired allée to meet him; she exhorted him to exert his patience and fortitude, and told him that all would end well. "No, madam," he replied, "never!" "Do you then doubt,"

she said, "either my heart, or my influence?" He replied, "I acknowledge your influence, and know your goodness to me; but I have an aunt who loves me in quite a different manner. That pious woman every day implores God to bestow on me disgrace, humiliation, and occasions for penitence, and she has more influence than you." As he said these words, the sound of a carriage was heard; "The king is coming!" said Madame de Maintenon, "hide yourself!"

To this last point of misery and degradation was this great genius reduced. Shortly after, he died, and was buried at the feet of his master in the chapel of the studious and religious society of Port-Royal.

The sacred dramas of "Esther" and "Athaliah" were among the later productions of Racine. The fate of "Athaliah," his masterpiece, was remarkable. The public imagined that it was a piece written only for children, as it was performed by the young scholars of St. Cyr, and received it so coldly that Racine was astonished and disgusted. He earnestly requested Boileau's opinion, who maintained it was his capital work. "I understand these things," said he, "and the public *y reviendra*." The prediction was a true one, but it was accomplished too late, long after the death of the author; it was never appreciated till it was publicly performed.

Boileau and Racine derived little or no profit from the booksellers. Boileau particularly, though fond of money, was so delicate on this point, that he gave all his works away. It was this that made him so bold in railing at those authors *qui mettent leur Apollon aux gages d'un libraire*, and he declared that he had only inserted these verses,

"Je sai qu'un noble esprit peut sans honte et sans crime
Tirer de son travail un tribut légitime,"

to console Racine, who had received some profits from the printing of his tragedies. Those profits were, however, inconsiderable; the truth is, the king remunerated the poets.

Racine's first royal mark of favour was an order signed by Colbert for six hundred livres, *to give him the means of continuing his studies of the belles-lettres*. He received, by an account found among his papers, above forty thousand livres from the cassette of the king, by the hand of the first valet-de-chambre. Besides these gifts, Racine had a pension of four thousand livres, as historiographer, and another pension as a man of letters.

Which is the more honourable? to crouch for a salary brought by the hand of the first valet-de-chambre, or to exult in the tribute offered by the public to an author?

OF STERNE.

CERVANTES is immortal—Rabelais and STERNE have passed away to the curious.

These fraternal geniuses alike chose their subjects from their own times. Cervantes, with the innocent design of correcting a temporary folly of his countrymen, so that the very success of the design might have proved fatal to the work itself; for when he had cut off the heads of the Hydra, an extinct monster might cease to interest the readers of other times, and other manners. But Cervantes, with judgment equal to his invention, and with a cast of genius made for all times, delighted his contemporaries and charms his posterity. He looked to the world and collected other follies than the Spanish ones, and to another age than the administration of the duke of Lerma; with more genuine pleasantry than any writer from the days of Lucian, not a solitary spot has soiled the purity of his page; while there is scarcely a subject in human nature for which we might not find some apposite illustration. His style, pure as his thoughts, is, however, a magic which ceases to work in all translations, and Cervantes is not Cervantes in English or in French; yet still he retains his popularity among all the nations of Europe; which is more than we can say even of our Shakespeare!

Rabelais and Sterne were not perhaps inferior in genius, and they were read with as much avidity and delight as the Spaniard. "Le docte Rabelais" had the learning which the Englishman wanted; while unhappily Sterne undertook to satirise false erudition, which requires the knowledge of the true. Though the "Papemanes," on whom Rabelais has exhausted his grotesque humour and his caustic satire, have not yet walked off the stage, we pay a heavy price in the grossness of his ribaldry and his tiresome balderdash for odd stories and flashes of witty humour. Rabelais hardly finds readers even in France, with the exception of a few literary antiquaries. The day has passed when a gay dissolute abbé could obtain a rich abbey by getting Rabelais by heart, for the perpetual improvement of his patron—and Rabelais is now little more than a Rabelais by tradition.

In my youth the world doted on Sterne! Martin Sherlock ranks him among "the luminaries of the century." Forty years ago, young men, in their most facetious humours, never failed to find the archetypes of society in the Shandy family—every good-natured soul was uncle Toby, every humorist was old Shandy, every child of Nature was Corporal Trim! It may now be doubted whether Sterne's natural dispositions were the humorous or the pathetic: the pathetic has survived!

There is nothing of a more ambiguous nature

than strong humour, and Sterne found it to be so; and latterly, in despair, he asserted that "the taste for humour is the gift of heaven!" I have frequently observed how humour, like the taste for olives, is even repugnant to some palates, and have witnessed the epicure of humour lose it all by discovering how some have utterly rejected his favourite relish! Even men of wit may not taste humour! The celebrated Dr. Cheyne, who was not himself deficient in originality of thinking with great learning and knowledge, once entrusted to a friend a remarkable literary confession. Dr. Cheyne assured him that "he could not read 'Don Quixote' with any pleasure, nor had any taste for Hudibras or Gulliver; and that what we call *wit* and *humour* in these authors, he considered as false ornaments, and never to be found in those compositions of the ancients which we most admire and esteem*." Cheyne seems to have held Aristophanes and Lucian monstrously cheap! The ancients, indeed, appear not to have possessed that comic quality that we understand as *humour*, nor can I discover a word which exactly corresponds with our term *humour* in any language, ancient or modern. Cervantes excels in that sly satire which hides itself under the cloak of gravity, but this is not the sort of humour which so beautifully plays about the delicacy of Addison's page; and both are distinct from the broader and strong humour of Sterne.

The result of Dr. Cheyne's honest confession was experienced by Sterne, for while more than half of the three kingdoms were convulsed with laughter at his humour, the other part were obdurately dull to it. Take, for instance, two very opposite effects produced by Tristram Shandy on a man of strong original humour himself, and a wit who had more delicacy and sarcasm than force and originality. The Rev. Philip Skelton declared that "after reading Tristram Shandy, he could not for two or three days attend seriously to his devotion, it filled him with so many ludicrous ideas." But Horace Walpole, who found his "Sentimental Journey" very pleasing, declares that of "his tiresome 'Tristram Shandy' he could never get through three volumes."

The literary life of Sterne was a short one: it was a blaze of existence, and it turned his head. With his personal life we are only acquainted by tradition. Was the great sentimentalist himself unfeeling, dissolute, and utterly depraved? Some anecdotes which one of his companions† communicated to me, confirm Garrick's account preserved in Dr. Burney's collections, that "He was more dissolute in his conduct than his writings, and generally drove every female away by his ribaldry. He degenerated in London like an ill-transplanted shrub; the incense of the great spoiled his head, and their ragouts his stomach. He grew sickly and proud—an invalid in body and mind." Warburton declared that "he was an irrecoverable scoundrel." Authenticated facts are, however, wanting for a judicious summary of the real character of the founder of sentimental writing. An impenetrable mystery hangs over his family conduct; he has thrown many sweet domestic touches in his own memoirs and letters addressed to his daughter: but it would seem that he was often parted from his family. After he had earnestly solicited the return of his wife from France, though she did return, he was suffered to die in utter neglect.

His sermons have been observed to be characterised by an air of levity; he attempted this unusual manner. It was probably a caprice which induced him to introduce one of his sermons in "Tristram Shandy;" it was fixing a diamond in black velvet, and the contrast set off the brilliancy. But he seems then to have had no design of publishing his "Sermons." One day, in low spirits, complaining to Caleb Whitefoord of the state of his finances, Caleb asked him "if he had no sermons like the one in 'Tristram Shandy?'" But Sterne had no notion that "sermons" were saleable, for two preceding ones had passed unnoticed. "If you could hit on a striking title, take my word for it that they would go down." The next day Sterne made his appearance in raptures. "I have it!" he cried: "Dramatic Sermons by Yorick." With great difficulty he was persuaded to drop this allusion to the church and the playhouse!

We are told in the short addition to his own memoirs, that "he submitted to fate on the 18th day of March, 1768, at his lodgings in Bond-street." But it does not appear to have been noticed that Sterne died with neither friend nor relation by his side! a hired nurse was the sole companion of the man whose wit found admirers in every street, but whose heart, it would seem, could not draw one to his death-bed. We cannot say whether Sterne, who had long been dying, had resolved to practise his own principle,—when he made the philosopher Shandy, who had a fine saying for everything, deliver his opinion on death—that "there is no terror, brother Toby, in its

* This friend, it now appears, was Dr. King of Oxford, whose anecdotes have recently been published. This curious fact is given in a strange hodge-podge, entitled "The Dreamer;" a remarkable instance where a writer of learning often conceives that to be humour, which to others is not even intelligible!

† Caleb Whitefoord, the wit once famed for his invention of cross-readings, which appeared under the name of "Papirius Cursor."

looks, but what it borrows from groans and convulsions—and the blowing of noses, and the wiping away of tears with the bottoms of curtains in a dying man's room. Strip it of these, what is it?" I find the moment of his death described in a singular book, the "Life of a Footman." I give it with all its particulars. "In the month of January, 1768, we set off for London. We stopped for some time at Almack's house in Pall-Mall. My master afterwards took Sir James Gray's house in Clifford-street, who was going ambassador to Spain. He now began house-keeping, hired a French cook, a house-maid, and kitchen-maid, and kept a great deal of the best company. About this time, Mr. Sterne, the celebrated author, was taken ill at the silk-bag shop in Old Bond-street. He was sometimes called 'Tristram Shandy,' and sometimes 'Yorick;' a very great favourite of the gentlemen's. One day my master had company to dinner who were speaking about him; the Duke of Roxburgh, the Earl of March, the Earl of Ossory, the Duke of Grafton, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Hume, and Mr. James. 'John,' said my master, 'go and inquire how Mr. Sterne is to-day.' I went, returned and said,—I went to Mr. Sterne's lodging; the mistress opened the door; I inquired how he did. She told me to go up to the nurse; I went into the room, and he was just a-dying. I waited ten minutes; but in five he said, 'Now it is come!' He put up his hand as if to stop a blow, and died in a minute. The gentlemen were all very sorry, and lamented him very much*."

Such is the simple narrative of the death of this wit!

Some letters and papers of Sterne are now before me which reveal a piece of secret history of our sentimentalist. The letters are addressed to a young lady of the name of De Fourmantel, whose ancestors were the Berangers de Fourmantel, who during the persecution of the French Protestants by Louis XIV. emigrated to this country; they were entitled to extensive possessions in St. Domingo, but were excluded by their Protestantism. The elder sister became a Catholic, and obtained the estates; the younger adopted the name of Beranger, and was a governess to the Countess of Bristol. The paper states that Catherine de Fourmantel formed an attachment to Sterne, and that it was the expectation of their friends that they would be united; but that on a visit Sterne became acquainted with a lady, whom he married in the space of one month, after having paid his addresses to Miss de Fourmantel for five years. The consequence was, the total derangement of intellect of this young lady. She was confined in a private mad-house. Sterne twice saw her there, and from observation on her state drew the "Maria" whom he has so pathetically described. The elder sister, at the instigation of the father of the communicator of these letters, came to England, and took charge of the unhappy Maria, who died at Paris. "For many years," says the writer of this statement, "my mother had the *handkerchief* Sterne alludes to." The anxious wish of Sterne was to have his letters returned to him. In this he failed; and such as they are, without date, either of time or place, they are now before me.

The billets-doux are unquestionably authentic, but the statement is inaccurate. I doubt whether the narrative be correct in stating that Sterne married after an acquaintance of one month; for he tells us in his Memoirs that he courted his wife for two years; he however married in 1741. The "Sermon of Elijah," which he presents to Miss de Fourmantel in one of these letters, was not published till 1747. Her disordered mind could not therefore have been occasioned by the *sudden* marriage of Sterne. A sentimental intercourse evidently existed between them. He perhaps sought in her sympathy consolation for his domestic infelicity; he communicates to her the minutest events of his early fame; and these letters, which certainly seem very like love-letters, present a picture of his life in town in the full flower of his fame, eager with hope and flushed with success.

LETTER I.

"My dear Kitty,

"I beg you will accept of the inclosed sermon, which I do not make you a present of merely because it was wrote by myself, but because there is a beautiful character in it of a tender and compassionate mind in the picture given of Elijah. Read it, my dear Kitty, and believe me when I assure you that I see something of the same kind and gentle disposition in your heart which I have painted in the prophet's, which has attached me so much to you and your interests, that I shall live and die

"Your affectionate and faithful servant,

"Laurence Sterne.

"P.S.—If possible I will see you this afternoon before I go to Mr. Fothergil's. Adieu, dear friend,—I had the pleasure to drink your health last night."

* "Travels in various parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, during a series of thirty years and upwards, by John Macdonald, a cadet of the family of Kippoch, in Invernessshire, who after the ruin of his family in 1765, was thrown, when a child, on the wide world, &c. Printed for the author, 1790."—He served a number of noblemen and gentlemen in the humble station of a footman. There is such an air of truth and sincerity throughout the work that I entertain no doubt of its genuineness.

LETTER II.

"My dear Kitty,

"If this billet catches you in bed, you are a lazy sleepy little slut, and I am a giddy, foolish, unthinking fellow for keeping you so late up—but this Sabbath is a day of rest; at the same time that it is a day of sorrow, for I shall not see my dear creature to-day, unless you meet me at Taylor's half an hour after twelve; but in this do as you like. I have ordered Matthew to turn thief and steal you a quart of honey—what is honey to the sweetness of thee, who art sweeter than all the flowers it comes from! I love you to distraction, Kitty, and will love you on so to eternity—so adieu, and believe, what time will only prove me, that I am, "Yours."

LETTER III.

"My dear Kitty,

"I have sent you a pot of sweetmeats and a pot of honey—neither of them half so sweet as yourself—but don't be vain upon this—or presume to grow sour upon this character of sweetness I give you; for if you do I shall send you a pot of pickles (by way of contraries) to sweeten you up, and bring you to yourself again—whatever changes happen to you, believe me that I am unalterably yours, and according to your motto such a one, my dear Kitty,

"Qui ne changera pas qu'en mourant.

"L. S."

He came up to town in 1760, to publish the two first volumes of Shandy, of which the first edition had appeared at York the preceding year.

LETTER IV.

"*London, May* 8.

"My dear Kitty,

"I have arrived here safe and sound—except for the hole in my heart which you have made, like a dear enchanting slut as you are.—I shall take lodgings this morning in Piccadilly or the Haymarket, and before I send this letter will let you know where to direct a letter to me, which letter I shall wait for by the return of the post with great impatience.

"I have the greatest honours paid me and most civilities shown me that were ever known from the great; and am engaged already to ten noblemen and men of fashion to dine. Mr. Garrick pays me all and more honour than I could look for: I dined with him to-day—and he has prompted numbers of great people to carry me to dine with them—he has given me an order for the liberty of his boxes and of every part of his house for the whole season; and indeed leaves nothing undone that can do me either service or credit. He has undertaken the whole management of the booksellers, and will procure me a great price—but more of this in my next.

"And now, my dear girl, let me assure you of the truest friendship for you that ever man bore towards a woman—wherever I am my heart is warm towards you, and ever shall be, till it is cold for ever. I thank you for the kind proof you gave me of your desire to make my heart easy in ordering yourself to be denied to you know who—while I am so miserable to be separated from my dear dear Kitty, it would have stabbed my soul to have thought such a fellow could have the liberty of coming near you.—I therefore take this proof of your love and good principles most kindly—and have as much faith and dependence upon you in it, as if I was at your elbow—would to God I was at this moment—for I am sitting solitary and alone in my bedchamber (ten o'clock at night after the play), and would give a guinea for a squeeze of your hand. I send my soul perpetually out to see what you are a doing—wish I could convey my body with it—adieu, dear and kind girl.—Ever your kind friend and affectionate admirer.

"I go to the oratorio this night. My service to your mama."

LETTER V.

"My dear Kitty,

"Though I have but a moment's time to spare, I would not omit writing you an account of my good fortune; my lord Fauconberg has this day given me a hundred and sixty pounds a year, which I hold with all my preferment; so that all or the most part of my sorrows and tears are going to be wiped away.—I have but one obstacle to my happiness now left—and what that is you know as well as I *.

"I long most impatiently to see my dear Kitty. I had a purse of guineas given me yesterday by a bishop—all will do well in time.

"From morning to night my lodgings, which by the bye are the genteelest in town †, are full of the greatest company.—I dined these two days with two ladies of the bedchamber—then with Lord Rockingham, Lord Edgcumb, Lord Winchelsea, Lord Littleton, a bishop, &c. &c.

"I assure you, my dear Kitty, that Tristram is the fashion.—Pray to God I may see my dearest girl soon and well.—Adieu.

"Your affectio nate friend,

"L. Sterne."

* Can this allude to the death of his wife?—that very year he tells his daughter he had taken a house at York, "for your mother and yourself."

† They were the second house from St. Alban's Street, Pall-Mall.

HUME, ROBERTSON, AND BIRCH.

The rarest of literary characters is such an historian as Gibbon; but we know the price which he paid for his acquisitions—unbroken and undeviating studies. Wilkes, a mere wit, could only discover the drudgery of compilation in the profound philosopher and painter of men and of nations. A speculative turn of mind, delighting in generalising principles and aggregate views, is usually deficient in that closer knowledge, without which every step we take is on the fairy-ground of conjecture and theory, very apt to shift its unsubstantial scenes. The Researchers are like the inhabitants of a city who live among its ancient edifices, and are in the market-places and the streets: but the theorists, occupied by perspective views, with a more artist-like pencil may impose on us a general resemblance of things; but often shall we find in those shadowy outlines how the real objects are nearly, if not wholly lost—for much is given which is fanciful, and much omitted which is true.

Of our two popular historians, Hume and Robertson, alike in character but different in genius, it is much to be lamented that neither came to their tasks with the previous studies of half a life; and their speculative or theoretical histories are of so much the less value whenever they are deficient in that closer research which can be obtained only in one way; not the most agreeable to those literary adventurers, for such they are, however high they rank in the class of genius, who grasp at early celebrity, and depend more on themselves than on their researches.

In some curious letters to the literary antiquary Dr. Birch, Robertson acknowledges "my chief object is to *adorn*, as far as I am capable of adorning, the history of a period which deserves to be better known." He probably took his lesson from Voltaire, the reigning author of that day, and a great favourite with Robertson. Voltaire indeed tells us, that no writers, but those who have composed tragedies, can throw any interest into a history; that we must know to paint and excite the passions; and that a history, like a dramatic piece, must have situation, intrigue, and catastrophe; an observation which, however true, at least shows that there can be but a moderate quantity of truth in such agreeable narratives. Robertson's notion of *adorning* history was the pleasing labour of genius,—it was to amplify into vastness, to colour into beauty, and to arrange the objects of his meditation with a secret artifice of disposition. Such an historian is a sculptor, who, though he display a correct semblance of nature, is not less solicitous to display the miracles of his art, and enlarges his figures to a colossal dimension. Such is theoretical history.

The theoretical historian communicates his own character to his history; and if, like Robertson, he be profound and politic, he detects the secret motives of his actors, unravels the webs of cabinet councils, explains projects that were unknown, and details stratagems which never took place. When we admire the fertile conceptions of the Queen Regent, of Elizabeth, and of Bothwell, we are often defrauding Robertson of whatever admiration may be due to such deep policy.

When Hume received from Dr. Birch Forbes's Manuscripts and Murdin's State-papers, in great haste he writes to his brother historian: "What I wrote you with regard to Mary, &c., was from the printed histories and papers. But I am now sorry to tell you that by Murdin's State-papers, the matter is put beyond all question. I got these papers during the holidays by Dr. Birch's means; and as soon as I read them *I ran to Millar*, and desired him very earnestly to stop the publication of your history, till I should write to you, and give you an opportunity of correcting a mistake so important; but he absolutely refused compliance. He said that your book was now finished; that the whole narrative of Mary's trial must be wrote over again; that it was uncertain whether the new narrative could be brought within the same compass with the old; that this change would require the cancelling a great many sheets; that there were scattered *passages through the volumes founded on your theory*." What an interview was this of Andrew Millar and David Hume! truly the bibliopole shone to greater advantage than the *two theoretical historians!* And so the world had, and eagerly received, what this critical bookseller declared "required the new printing (that is, the new writing) of a great part of the edition!"

When this successful history of Scotland invited Robertson to pursue this newly-discovered province of philosophical or theoretical history, he was long irresolute in his designs, and so unpractised in those researches he was desirous of attempting, that his admirers would have lost his popular productions, had not a fortunate introduction to Dr. Birch, whose life had been spent in historical pursuits, enabled the Scottish historian to open many a clasped book, and to drink of many a sealed fountain. Robertson was long undecided whether to write the history of Greece, of Leo X., that of William III. and Queen Anne, or that of Charles V., and perhaps many other subjects.

We have a curious letter of Lord Orford's, detailing the purport of a visit Robertson paid to him to inquire after materials for the reigns of William and Anne; he seemed to have little other

knowledge than what he had taken upon trust. "I painted to him," says Lord Orford, "the difficulties and the want of materials—but the booksellers will out-argue me." Both the historian and "the booksellers" had resolved on another history; and Robertson looked upon it as a task which he wished to have set to him, and not a glorious toil long matured in his mind. But how did he come prepared to the very dissimilar subjects he proposed? When he resolved to write the history of Charles V., he confesses to Dr. Birch: "I never had *access to any copious libraries*, and do not pretend to *any extensive knowledge of authors*; but I have made a list of such as I thought most essential to the subject, and have put them down *as I found them mentioned in any book I happened to read*. Your erudition and knowledge of books is infinitely superior to mine, and I doubt not but you will be able to make such additions to my catalogue as may be of great use to me. I know very well, and to my sorrow, *how servilely historians copy from one another*, and how little is to be learned from reading many books; but at the same time, when one writes upon any particular period, it is both necessary and decent for him to consult every book relating to it upon which he can lay his hands." This avowal proves that Robertson knew little of the history of Charles V. till he began the task; and he further confesses that "he had no knowledge of the Spanish or German," which, for the history of a Spanish monarch and a German emperor, was somewhat ominous of the nature of the projected history.

Yet Robertson, though he once thus acknowledged, as we see, that he "never had access to any copious libraries, and did not *pretend to any extensive knowledge of authors*," seems to have acquired from his friend, Dr. Birch, who was a genuine researcher in manuscripts as well as printed books, a taste even for bibliographical ostentation, as appears by that pompous and voluminous list of authors prefixed to his History of America; the most objectionable of his histories, being a perpetual apology for the Spanish Government, adapted to the meridian of the court of Madrid, rather than to the cause of humanity, of truth, and of philosophy. I understand, from good authority, that it would not be difficult to prove that our historian had barely examined them, and probably had never turned over half of that deceptive catalogue. Birch thought so, and was probably a little disturbed at the overwhelming success of our eloquent and penetrating historian, while his own historical labours, the most authentic materials of history, but not history itself, hardly repaid the printer. Birch's publications are either originals, that is, letters or state-papers; or they are narratives drawn from originals, for he never wrote but from manuscripts. They are the true *materia historica*.

Birch, however, must have enjoyed many a secret triumph over our popular historians, who had introduced their beautiful philosophical history into our literature; the dilemma in which they sometimes found themselves must have amused him. He has thrown out an oblique stroke at Robertson's "pomp of style, and fine eloquence," "which too often tend to disguise the real state of the facts*." When he received from Robertson the present of his "Charles V.," after the just tribute of his praise, he adds some regret that the historian had not been so fortunate as to have seen Burghley's State-papers, "published since Christmas," and a manuscript trial of Mary Queen of Scots, in Lord Royston's possession. Alas! such is the fate of *speculative history*; a Christmas may come, and overturn the elaborate castle in the air. Can we forbear a smile when we hear Robertson, who had projected a history of British America, of which we possess two chapters, when the rebellion and revolution broke out, congratulate himself that he had not made any further progress? "It is lucky that my American history was not finished before this event; how many plausible theories that I should have been entitled to form are contradicted by what has now happened!" A fair confession!

Let it not be for one moment imagined, that this article is designed to depreciate the genius of Hume and Robertson, who are the noblest of our modern authors, and exhibit a perfect idea of the literary character.

Forty-four years ago, I transcribed from their originals the correspondence of the historian with the literary antiquary. For the satisfaction of the reader, I here preserve these literary relics.

Letters between Dr. Birch and Dr. W. Robertson, relative to the Histories of Scotland and of Charles V.

TO DR. BIRCH.

"Reverend Sir,

"Though I have not the good fortune to be known to you personally, I am so happy as to be no stranger to your writings, to which I have been indebted for much useful instruction. And as I have heard from my friends Sir David Dalrymple and Mr. Davidson, that your disposition to oblige was equal to your knowledge, I now presume to write to you and to ask your assistance without any apology.

"I have been engaged for some time in writing the history of Scotland from the death of James V. to the accession of James VI. to the throne of England. My chief object is to adorn (as far as I

* See Curiosities of Literature, 11th edition, p. 515.

am capable of adorning) the history of a period, which on account of the greatness of the events, and their close connection with the transactions in England deserves to be better known. But as elegance of composition, even where a writer can attain that, is but a trivial merit without historical truth and accuracy, and as the prejudices and rage of factions, both religious and political, have rendered almost every fact, in the period which I have chosen, a matter of doubt or of controversy, I have therefore taken all the pains in my power to examine the evidence on both sides with exactness. You know how copious the *materia historica* in this period is. Besides all the common historians and printed collections of papers, I have consulted several manuscripts which are to be found in this country. I am persuaded that there are still many manuscripts worth my seeing to be met with in England, and for that reason I propose to pass some time in London this winter. I am impatient however to know what discoveries of this kind I may expect, and what are the treasures before me and with regard to this I beg leave to consult you.

"I was afraid for some time that Dr. Forbes's Collections had been lost upon his death, but I am glad to find by your 'Memoirs' that they are in the possession of Mr. Yorke. I see likewise that the 'Dépêches de Beaumont' are in the hands of the same gentleman. But I have no opportunity of consulting your 'Memoirs' at present, and I cannot remember whether the 'Dépêches de Fenelon' be still preserved or not. I see that Carte has made a great use of them in a very busy period from 1563 to 1576. I know the strength of Carte's prejudices so well that I dare say many things may be found there that he could not see, or would not publish. May I beg the favour of you to let me know whether Fenelon's papers be yet extant and accessible, and to give me some general idea of what Dr. Forbes's Collections contain with regard to Scotland, and whether the papers they consist of are different from those published by Haynes, Anderson, &c. I am far from desiring that you should enter into any detail, that would be troublesome to you, but some short hint of the nature of these Collections would be extremely satisfying to my curiosity, and I shall esteem it a great obligation laid upon me.

"I have brought my work almost to a conclusion. If you would be so good as to suggest anything that you thought useful for me to know or to examine into I shall receive your directions with great respect and gratitude.

"I am with sincere esteem,
"Rev^{d} Sir Y^{r} m. ob. & m. h. S^{r}
"Wm. Robertson.
"*Gladsmuir*, 19 *Sept.* 1757."

TO DR. BIRCH.

"Dear Sir,

"If I had not considered a letter of mere compliment as an impertinent interruption to one who is so busy as you commonly are, I would long before this have made my acknowledgments to you for the civilities which you was so good as to show me while I was in London. I had not only a proof of your obliging disposition but I reaped the good effects of it.

"The papers to which I got access by your means, especially those from Lord Royston, have rendered my work more perfect than it could have otherwise been. My history is now ready for publication, and I have desired Mr. Millar to send you a large-paper copy of it in my name, which I beg you may accept as a testimony of my regard and of my gratitude. He will likewise transmit to you another copy which I must entreat you to present to my Lord Royston, with such acknowledgments of his favours toward me as are proper for me to make. I have printed a short appendix of original papers. You will observe that there are several inaccuracies in the press work. Mr. Millar grew impatient to have the book published, so that it was impossible to send down the proofs to me. I hope, however, the papers will be abundantly intelligible. I published them only to confirm my own system, about particular facts, not to obtain the character of an antiquarian. If upon perusing the book you discover any inaccuracies, either with regard to style or facts, whether of great or of small importance I will esteem it a very great favour, if you'll be so good as to communicate them to me. I shall likewise be indebted to you, if you 'll let me know what reception the book meets with among the literati of your acquaintance. I hope you will be particularly pleased with the critical dissertation at the end, which is the production of a co-partnership between me and your friend Mr. Davidson. Both Sir D. Dalrymple and he offer compliments to you. If Dean Tucker be in town this winter, I beg you would offer my compliments to him.

"I am w. great regard D^{r}. Sir
"Y^{r} m. obed^{t} & mst. o. ser^{t}
"William Robertson.
"*Edinburgh*, 1 *Jan.* 1759.
"My address is, one of the ministers of Ed."

TO DR. BIRCH.

"Dear Sir,

"I beg leave once more to have recourse to your good nature and to your love of literature, and to presume upon putting you to a piece of trouble. After considering several subjects for another history I have at last fixed upon the reign of Charles V. which contains the first establish-

ment of the present political system of Europe. I have begun to labour seriously upon my task. One of the first things requisite was to form a catalogue of books which must be consulted. As I never had access to very copious libraries, I do not pretend to any extensive knowledge of authors, but I have made a list of such as I thought most essential to the subject, and have put them down just in the order which they occurred to me, or as I found them mentioned in any book I happened to read. I beg you would be so good as to look it over, and as your erudition and knowledge of books is infinitely superior to mine, I doubt not but you'll be able to make such additions to my catalogue as may be of great use to me. I know very well and to my sorrow, how servilely historians copy from one another, and how little is to be learned from reading many books, but at the same time when one writes upon any particular period it is both necessary and decent for him to consult every book relating to it, upon which he can lay his hands. I am sufficiently master of French and Italian; but have no knowledge of the Spanish or German tongues. I flatter myself that I shall not suffer much by this, as the two former languages together with the Latin, will supply me with books in abundance. Mr. Walpole informed me some time ago that in the catalogue of Harleian MSS. in the British Museum, there is a volume of papers relating to Charles V., it is No. 295. I do not expect much from it, but it would be extremely obliging if you would take the trouble of looking into it and of informing me in general what it contains. In the catalogue I have enclosed, this mark × is prefixed to all the books which I can get in this country; if you yourself, or any friend with whom you can use freedom, have any of the other books in my list, and will be so good as to send them to Mr. Millar he will forward them to me, and I shall receive them with great gratitude and return them with much punctuality. I beg leave to offer compliments to all our common friends, and particularly to Dean Tucker, if he be in town this season. I wish it were in my power to confer any return for all the trouble you have taken in my behalf——

"*Edinburgh*, 13 *Dec.* 1759."

FROM DR. BIRCH.

TO THE REV. DR. ROBERTSON, AT EDINBURGH.

"Dear Sir, *London* 3 *Jany.* 1760.

"Your letter of the 13 Dec^{r}. was particularly agreeable to me, as it acquainted me with your resolution to resume your historic pen, and to undertake a subject which, from its importance and extent, and your manner of treating it, will be highly acceptable to the public.

"I have perused your list of books to be consulted on this occasion; and after transcribing it have delivered it to Mr. Millar; and shall now make some additions to it.

"The new 'Histoire d'Allemagne' by father Barre, chancellor of the university of Paris, published a few years ago in several volumes in q°. is a work of very good credit, and to be perused by you; as is likewise the second edition of 'Abrégé chronologique de l'Histoire & du Droit public d'Allemagne' just printed at Paris, and formed upon the plan of president Henault's 'Nouvel Abrégé chronologique de l'Histoire de France,' in which the reigns of Francis I. and Henry II. will be proper to be seen by you.

"The 'Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire du Cardinal Granvelle' by father Rosper Levesque a Benedictin monk which were printed at Paris in two vol^{s}. 12° in 1753 contain some particulars relating to Charles V. But this performance is much less curious than it might have been, considering that the author had the advantage of a vast collection, above an hundred volumes of the Cardinal's original papers, at Besançon. Among these are the papers of his eminence's father who was chancellor and minister to the Emperor Charles V.

"Bishop Burnet in the 'Summary of Affairs before the Restoration' prefixed to his 'History of his Own Time', mentions a life of Frederick Elector Palatine who first reformed the Palatinate as curiously written by Hubert Thomas Leodius. This book though a very rare one, is in my study and shall be sent to you. You will find in it many facts relating to your Emperor. The manuscript was luckily saved when the library of Heydelberg was plundered and conveyed to the Vatican after the taking of that city in 1622 and it was printed in 1624 at Francfort in 4to. The writer had been secretary and councellor to the elector.

"Another book which I shall transmit to you is a valuable collection of state papers made by Mons^{r} Rivier and printed at Blois in 1665 in two vols f°. They relate to the reigns of Francis I., Henry II. and Francis II. of France. The indexes will direct you to such passages as concern the Emperor.

"As Mons^{r}. Amelot de la Houssaie who was extremely conversant in modern history has in the 1st Tome of his 'Mémoires Historiques Politiques et Littéraires' from p. 156 to 193 treated of Charles V., I shall add that book to my parcel.

"Varillas's Life of Henry II. of France should be looked into, though that historian has not at present much reputation for exactness and veracity.

"Dr. Fiddes in his Life of Cardinal Wolsey, has frequent occasion to introduce the Emperor his contemporary, of which Bayle in his Dictionary gives us an express article and not a short one, for it consists of eight of his pages.

"Roger Ascham, Queen Elizabeth's preceptor, when he was secretary to S^r. Richard Morysin amb. from K. Edward VI. to the imperial court, wrote to a friend of his 'a report and discourse of the affairs and state of Germany and the Emperor Charles's court.' This was printed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; but the copies of that edition are now very rare. However this will be soon made public, being reprinted in an edition of all the author's English works now in the press.

"The 'Epitres des Princes' translated from the Italian by Belleforest will probably supply you with some few things to your purpose.

Vol. 295 among the Harleian MSS. contains little remarkable except some letters from Henry VIII's amb^r. in Spain in 1518 of which you may see an abstract in the printed catalogue.

"In Dr. Hayne's 'Collection of State Papers in the Hatfield History' p. 56 is a long letter of the lord of the council of Henry VIII. in 1546 to his amb^r. with the Emperor."

TO DR. BIRCH.

Extract from a letter of Dr. Robertson, dated College of Edinburgh, Oct. 8, 1765.

"* * * I have met with many interruptions in carrying on my 'Charles V.,' partly from bad health, and partly from the avocations arising from performing the duties of my office. But I am now within sight of land. The historical part of the work is finished and I am busy with a preliminary book in which I propose to give a view of the progress in the state of society, laws, manners, and arts, from the irruption of the barbarous nations to the beginning of the sixteenth century. This is a laborious undertaking; but I flatter myself that I shall be able to finish it in a few months. I have kept the books you was so good as to send me, and shall return them carefully as soon as my work is done."

OF VOLUMINOUS WORKS INCOMPLETE BY THE DEATHS OF THE AUTHORS.

In those "Dances of Death" where every profession is shown as taken by surprise in the midst of their unfinished tasks, where the cook is viewed in flight oversetting his caldron of soup, and the physician, while inspecting his patient's urinal, is himself touched by the grim visitor, one more instance of poor mortality may be added in the writers of works designed to be pursued through a long series of volumes. The French have an appropriate designation for such works, which they call "*ouvrages de longue haleine*," and it has often happened that the *haleine* has closed before the work.

Works of literary history have been particularly subject to this mortifying check on intellectual enterprise, and human life has not yielded a sufficient portion for the communication of extensive acquirement! After years of reading and writing, the literary historian, who in his innumerable researches is critical as well as erudite, has still to arbitrate between conflicting opinions; to resolve on the doubtful, to clear up the obscure, and to grasp at remote researches:—but he dies, and leaves his favourite volumes little more than a project!

Feelingly the antiquary Hearne laments this general forgetfulness of the nature of all human concerns in the mind of the antiquary, who is so busied with other times and so interested for other persons than those about him. "It is the business of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him."

A few illustrious scholars have indeed escaped the fate reserved for most of their brothers. A long life, and the art of multiplying that life not only by an early attachment to study, but by that order and arrangement which shortens our researches, have sufficed for a MURATORI. With such a student time was a great capital, which he knew to put out at compound interest; and this Varro of the Italians, who performed an infinite number of things in the circumscribed period of ordinary life, appears not to have felt any dread of leaving his voluminous labours unfinished, but rather of wanting one to begin. This literary Alexander thought he might want a world to conquer! Muratori was never perfectly happy unless employed in two large works at the same time, and so much dreaded the state of literary inaction, that he was incessantly importuning his friends to suggest to him objects worthy of his future composition. The flame kindled in his youth, burned clear in his old age; and it was in his senility that he produced the twelve quartos of his *Annali d'Italia* as an addition to his twenty-nine folios of his *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, and the six folios of the *Antiquitates Medii Ævi!* yet these vast edifices of history are not all which this illustrious Italian has raised for his father-land. Gibbon in his Miscellaneous Works has drawn an admirable character of Muratori.

But such a fortunate result has rarely accompanied the labours of the literary worthies of this order. TIRABOSCHI indeed lived to complete his great national history of Italian literature; but, unhappily for us, WARTON, after feeling his way through the darker ages of our poetry, and just conducting us to a brighter region, in planning the map of the country of which he had only a Pisgah view, expires amid his volumes! Our poetical antiquary led us to the opening gates of

the paradise of our poetry, when, alas! they closed on him and on us! The most precious portion of Warton's history is but the fragment of a fragment.

Life passes away in collecting materials—the marble lies in blocks—and sometimes a colonnade is erected, or even one whole side of a palace indicates the design of the architect. Count MAZZUCHELLI, early in life, formed a noble but too mighty a project, in which, however, he considerably advanced. This was an historical and critical account of the memoirs and the writings of Italian authors; he even commenced the publication in alphabetical order, but the six invaluable folios we possess, only contain the authors the initial letters of whose names are A and B! This great literary historian had finished for the press other volumes, which the torpor of his descendants has suffered to lie in a dormant state. Rich in acquisition, and judicious in his decisions, the days of the patriotic Mazzuchelli were freely given to the most curious and elegant researches in his national literature; his correspondence is said to consist of forty volumes; with eight of literary memoirs, besides the lives of his literary contemporaries;—but Europe has been defrauded of the hidden treasures.

The history of BAILLET'S "Jugemens des Sçavans sur les Principaux Ouvrages des Auteurs," or Decisions of the Learned on the Learned, is a remarkable instance how little the calculations of writers of research serve to ascertain the period of their projected labour. Baillet passed his life in the midst of the great library of the literary family of the Lamoignons, and as an act of gratitude arranged a classified catalogue in thirty-two folio volumes; it indicated not only what any author had professedly composed on any subject, but also marked those passages relative to the subject which other writers had touched on. By means of this catalogue, the philosophical patron of Baillet at a single glance discovered the great results of human knowledge on any object of his inquiries. This catalogue, of equal novelty and curiosity, the learned came to study, and often transcribed its precious notices. Amid this world of books, the skill and labour of Baillet prompted him to collect the critical opinions of the learned, and from the experience he had acquired in the progress of his colossal catalogue, as a preliminary sketched one of the most magnificent plans of literary history. This instructive project has been preserved by Monnoye in his edition. It consists of six large divisions, with innumerable subdivisions. It is a map of the human mind, and presents a view of the magnitude and variety of literature, which few can conceive. The project was too vast for an individual; it now occupies seven quartos, yet it advanced no farther than the critics, translators, and poets, forming little more than the first, and a commencement of the second great division; to more important classes the laborious projector never reached!

Another literary history is the "Bibliothèque Françoise" of GOUJET, left unfinished by his death. He had designed a classified history of French literature, but of its numerous classes he has only concluded that of the translators, and not finished the second he had commenced, of the poets. He lost himself in the obscure times of French Literature, and consumed sixteen years on his eighteen volumes!

A great enterprise of the BENEDICTINES, the "Histoire Littéraire de la France," now consists of twelve large quartos, which even its successive writers have only been able to carry down to the close of the twelfth century*!

DAVID CLEMENT, a bookseller and a book-lover, designed the most extensive bibliography which had ever appeared; this history of books is not a barren nomenclature, the particulars and dissertations are sometimes curious; but the diligent life of the author only allowed him to proceed as far as the letter H! The alphabetical order which some writers have adopted, has often proved a sad memento of human life! The last edition of our own "Biographia Britannica," feeble, imperfect, and inadequate as the writers were to the task the booksellers had chosen them to execute, remains still a monument which every literary Englishman may blush to see so hopelessly interrupted.

When LE GRAND D'AUSSY, whose *Fabliaux* are so well known, adopted, in the warmth of antiquarian imagination, the plan suggested by the Marquis de Paulmy, first sketched in the *Mélanges tirés d'une grande Bibliothèque*, of a picture of the domestic life of the French people from their earliest periods, the subject broke upon him like a vision; it had novelty, amusement, and curiosity: "*le sujet m'en parut neuf, riche et piquant.*" He revelled amid the scenes of their architecture, the interior decorations of their houses, their changeable dress, their games, and recreations; in a word, on all the parts which were most adapted to amuse the fancy. But when he came to compose the more detailed work, the fairy scene faded in the length, the repetition, and the never-ending labour and weariness; and the three volumes which we now possess, instead of sports, dresses, and architecture, exhibit only a very curious, but not always a very amusing, account of the food of the French nation.

No one has more fully poured out his vexation of spirit—he may excite a smile in those who have never experienced this toil of books and manu-

* This work has been lately resumed.

scripts,—but he claims the sympathy of those who would discharge their public duties so faithfully to the public. I shall preserve a striking picture of these thousand task-works, coloured by the literary pangs of the voluminous author who is doomed never to finish his curious work :—

"Endowed with a courage at all proofs, with health which, till then, was unaltered, and which excess of labour has greatly changed, I devoted myself to write the lives of the learned of the sixteenth century. Renouncing all kinds of pleasure, working ten to twelve hours a-day, extracting, ceaselessly copying; after this sad life, I now wished to draw breath, turn over what I had amassed, and arrange it. I found myself possessed of many thousands of *bulletins*, of which the longest did not exceed many lines. At the sight of this frightful chaos, from which I was to form a regular history, I must confess that I shuddered; I felt myself for some time in a *stupor and depression of spirits*; and now actually that I have finished this work, *I cannot endure the recollection of that moment of alarm without a feeling of involuntary terror*. What a business is this, good God, of a compiler! In truth, it is too much condemned; it merits some regard. At length I regained courage; I returned to my researches: I have completed my plan, though every day I was forced to *add*, to *correct*, to *change my facts as well as my ideas*: SIX times has my hand *recopied my work*; and however fatiguing this may be, it certainly is not that portion of my task which has cost me most."

The history of the "Bibliotheca Britannica" of the late Dr. WATT, may serve as a mortifying example of the length of labour and the brevity of life. To this gigantic work the patient zeal of the writer had devoted twenty years; he had just arrived at the point of publication, when death folded down his last page; the son, who, during the last four years, had toiled under the direction of his father, was chosen to occupy his place. The work was in the progress of publication, when the son also died; and strangers now reap the fruits of their combined labours.

One cannot forbear applying to this subject of voluminous designs, which must be left unfinished, the forcible reflection of Johnson on the planting of trees: "There is a frightful interval between the seed and timber. He that calculates the growth of trees has the unwelcome remembrance of the shortness of life driven hard upon him. He knows that he is doing what will never benefit himself; and when he rejoices to see the stem arise, is disposed to repine that another shall cut it down."

OF DOMESTIC NOVELTIES AT FIRST CONDEMNED.

IT is amusing enough to discover that things, now considered among the most useful and even agreeable acquisitions of domestic life, on their first introduction ran great risks of being rejected, by the ridicule or the invective which they encountered. The repulsive effect produced on mankind by the mere strangeness of a thing, which at length we find established among our indispensable conveniences, or by a practice which has now become one of our habits, must be ascribed sometimes to a proud perversity in our nature; sometimes to the crossing of our interests, and to that repugnance to alter what is known, for that which has not been sanctioned by our experience. This feeling has, however, within the latter half century, considerably abated; but it proves, as in higher matters, that some philosophical reflection is required to determine on the usefulness, or the practical ability, of every object which comes in the shape of novelty or innovation. Could we conceive that man had never discovered the practice of washing his hands, but cleansed them as animals do their paws, he would for certain have ridiculed and protested against the inventor of soap, and as tardily, as in other matters, have adopted the invention. A reader, unaccustomed to minute researches, might be surprised, had he laid before him the history of some of the most familiar domestic articles which, in their origin, incurred the ridicule of the wits, and had to pass through no short ordeal of time in the strenuous opposition of the zealots against domestic novelties. The subject requires no grave investigation; we will, therefore, only notice a few of universal use. They will sufficiently demonstrate, that however obstinately man moves in "the march of intellect," he must be overtaken by that greatest of innovators—Time itself; and that, by his eager adoption of what he had once rejected, and by the universal use of what he once deemed unuseful, he will forget, or smile at the difficulties of a former generation, who were baffled in their attempts to do what we all are now doing.

FORKS are an Italian invention; and in England were so perfect a novelty in the days of Queen Bess, that Fynes Moryson, in his curious "Itinerary," relating a bargain with the patrone of a vessel which was to convey him from Venice to Constantinople, stipulated to be fed at his table, and to have "his glass or cup to drink in peculiar to himself, with his knife, spoon, and *fork*." This thing was so strange, that he found it necessary to describe it. It is an instrument "to hold the meat while he cuts it; for they hold it ill-manners that one should touch the meat with his

hands*." At the close of the sixteenth century were our ancestors eating as the Turkish noblesse at present do, with only the free use of their fingers, steadying their meat and conveying it to their mouths by their mere manual dexterity. They were, indeed, most indelicate in their habits, scattering on the table-cloth all their bones and parings. To purify their tables, the servant bore a long wooden "voiding knife," by which he scraped the fragments from the table into a basket, called "a voider." Beaumont and Fletcher describe the thing,

"They sweep the table with a wooden dagger."

Fabling Paganism had probably raised into a deity the little man who first taught us, as Ben Jonson describes its excellence—

"——— the laudable use of forks,
To the sparing of napkins."

This personage is well known to have been that odd compound, Coryat the traveller, the perpetual but of the wits. He positively claims this immortality. "I myself thought good to imitate the Italian fashion by this FORKED *cutting of meat*, not only while I was in Italy, but also in Germany, and oftentimes in England since I came home." Here the use of forks was, however, long ridiculed; it was reprobated in Germany, where some uncleanly saints actually preached against the unnatural custom "as an insult on Providence, not to touch our meat with our fingers." It is a curious fact, that forks were long interdicted in the Congregation de St. Maur, and were only used after a protracted struggle between the old members, zealous for their traditions, and the young reformers, for their fingers*. The allusions to the use of the fork, which we find in all the dramatic writers through the reigns of James the First and Charles the First, show that it was still considered as a strange affectation and novelty. The fork does not appear to have been in general use before the Restoration! On the introduction of forks, there appears to have been some difficulty in the manner they were to be held and used. In "The Fox," Sir Politic Would-be, counselling Peregrine at Venice, observes—

"——— Then you must learn the use
And handling of your silver fork at meals."

Whatever this art may be, either we have yet to learn it, or there is more than one way in which it may be practised. D'Archenholtz, in his "Tableau de l'Angleterre," asserts that an Englishman may be discovered anywhere, if he be observed at table, because he places his fork upon the left side of his plate; a Frenchman, by using the fork alone without the knife; and a German, by planting it perpendicularly into his plate; and a Russian, by using it as a tooth-pick."

TOOTH-PICKS seem to have come in with forks, as younger brothers of the table, and seem to have been borrowed from the nice manners of the stately Venetians. This implement of cleanliness was, however, doomed to the same anathema, as the fantastical ornament of "the complete Signor," the Italianated Englishman. How would the writers, who caught "the manners as they rise," have been astonished that now no decorous person would be unaccompanied by what Massinger in contempt calls

"Thy case of tooth-picks and thy silver fork!"

UMBRELLAS, in my youth, were not ordinary things; few but the macaronis of the day, as the dandies were then called, would venture to display them. For a long while it was not usual for men to carry them without incurring the brand of effeminacy; and they were vulgarly considered as the characteristics of a person whom the mob then hugely disliked, namely, a mincing Frenchman. At first, a single umbrella seems to have been kept at a coffee-house for some extraordinary occasion—lent as a coach or chair in a heavy shower—but not commonly carried by the walkers. The "Female Tatler" advertises, "the young gentleman belonging to the custom-house, who, in fear of rain, borrowed *the umbrella from Wilks' Coffee-house*, shall the next time be welcome to the maid's *pattens*." An umbrella carried by a man was obviously then considered as extreme effeminacy. As late as in 1778, one John Macdonald, a footman, who has written his own life, informs us, that when he carried "a fine silk umbrella, which he had brought from Spain, he could not with any comfort to himself use it; the people calling out 'Frenchman! why don't you get a coach?'" The fact was, that the hackney-coachmen and the chairmen, joining with the true *esprit de corps*, were clamorous against this portentous rival. This footman, in 1778, gives us further information:—"At this time there were no umbrellas worn in London, except in noblemen's and gentlemen's houses, where there was a large one hung in the hall to hold over a lady or a gentleman, if it rained, between the door and their carriage." His sister was compelled to quit his arm one day, from the abuse he drew down on himself by his umbrella. But he adds, that "he persisted for three months, till they took no further notice of this novelty. Foreigners began to use their's, and then the English. Now it is become a great trade in London." The state of our population might now, in

* Moryson's Itinerary, part i. p. 206.

† I find this circumstance concerning forks mentioned in the "Dictionnaire de Trevoux."

some degree, be ascertained by the number of umbrellas.

Coaches, on their first invention, offered a fruitful source of declamation, as an inordinate luxury, particularly among the ascetics of monkish Spain. The Spanish biographer of Don John of Austria, describing that golden age, the good old times, when they only used "carts drawn by oxen, riding in this manner to court," notices that it was found necessary to prohibit coaches by a royal proclamation; "to such a height was this *infernal vice* got, which has done so much injury to Castile." In this style nearly every domestic novelty has been attacked. The injury inflicted on Castile by the introduction of coaches could only have been felt by the purveyors of carts and oxen for a morning's ride. The same circumstances occurred in this country. When coaches began to be kept by the gentry, or were hired out, a powerful party found their "occupation gone!" Ladies would no longer ride on pillions behind their footmen, nor would take the air, where the air was purest, on the river. Judges and counsellors from their inns would no longer be conveyed by water to Westminster Hall, or jog on with all their gravity on a poor palfrey. Considerable bodies of men were thrown out of their habitual employments, the watermen, the hackneymen, and the saddlers. Families were now jolted, in a heavy wooden machine, into splendour and ruin. The disturbance and opposition these coaches created we should hardly now have known, had not Taylor, the water poet and man, sent down to us an invective against coaches, in 1629, dedicated to all who are grieved with "the world running on wheels."

Taylor, a humorist and satirist, as well as waterman, conveys some information in this rare tract of the period when coaches began to be more generally used—"Within our memories our nobility and gentry could ride well mounted, and sometimes walk on foot gallantly attended with fourscore brave fellows in blue coats, which was a glory to our nation far greater than forty of these leathern timbrels. Then the name of a *coach* was heathen Greek. Whoever saw but upon extraordinary occasions, Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Francis Drake ride in a coach? They made small use of coaches; there were but few in those times, and they were deadly foes to sloth and effeminacy. It is in the memory of many, when in the whole kingdom there was not one! It is a doubtful question whether the devil brought *tobacco* into England in *a coach*, for both appeared at the same time." It appears that families, for the sake of their exterior show, miserably contracted their domestic establishment; for Taylor, the water-poet, complains that when they used formerly to keep from ten to a hundred proper serving-men, they now made the best shift, and for the sake of their coach and horses had only "a butterfly page, a trotting footman, and a stiff-drinking coachman, a cook, a clerk, a steward, and a butler, which hath forced an army of tall fellows to the gate-houses," or prisons. Of one of the evil effects of this new fashion of coach-riding, this satirist of the town wittily observes, that as soon as a man was knighted, his lady was lamed for ever, and could not on any account be seen but in a coach. As hitherto our females had been accustomed to robust exercise, on foot or on horseback, they were now forced to substitute a domestic artificial exercise in sawing billets, swinging, or rolling the great roller in the alleys of their garden. In the change of this new fashion they found out the inconvenience of a sedentary life passed in their coaches.

Even at this early period of the introduction of coaches, they were not only costly in the ornaments,—in velvets, damasks, taffetas, silver and gold lace, fringes of all sorts, but their greatest pains were in matching their coach-horses. "They must be all of a colour, longitude, latitude, cressitude, height, length, thickness, breadth—(I muse they do not weigh them in a pair of balances); and when once matched with a great deal of care, if one of them chance to die, then is the coach maimed till a meet mate be found, whose corresponding may be as equivalent to the surviving palfrey, in all respects, as like as a broom to a besom, barm to yeast, or codlings to boiled apples." This is good natural humour. He proceeds—"They use more diligence in matching their coach-horses than in the marriage of their sons and daughters." A great fashion, in its novelty, is often extravagant; true elegance and utility are never at first combined; good sense and experience correct its caprices. They appear to have exhausted more cost and curiosity in their equipages, on their first introduction, than since they have become objects of ordinary use. Notwithstanding this humorous invective on the calamity of coaches, and that "house-keeping never decayed till coaches came into England; and that a ten-pound rent now was scarce twenty shillings then, till the witchcraft of the coach quickly mounted the price of all things." The water-poet, were he now living, might have acknowledged, that if, in the changes of time, some trades disappear, other trades rise up, and in an exchange of modes of industry the nation loses nothing. The hands which, like Taylor's, rowed boats, came to drive coaches. These complainers on all novelties, unawares always answer themselves. Our satirist affords us a most prosperous view of the condition of "this new trade of coachmakers, as the gainfullest about the town. They are apparelled in

sattins and velvets, are masters of the parish, vestrymen, and fare like the Emperor Heliogabalus and Sardanapalus,—seldom without their mackeroones, Parmisants, (macaroni, with Parmesan cheese, I suppose,) jellies and kickshaws, with baked swans, pastries hot or cold, red-deer pies, which they have from their debtors, worships in the country!" Such was the sudden luxurious state of our first great coach-makers!—to the deadly mortification of all watermen, hackneymen, and other conveyancers of our loungers, thrown out of employ!

Tobacco.—It was thought, at the time of its introduction, that the nation would be ruined by the use of tobacco. Like all novel tastes, the newly-imported leaf maddened all ranks among us. "The money spent in smoke is unknown," said a writer of that day, lamenting over this "new trade of tobacco, in which he feared that there were more than seven thousand tobacco houses." James the First, in his memorable "Counter-blast to Tobacco," only echoed from the throne the popular cry; but the blast was too weak against the smoke, and vainly his paternal majesty attempted to terrify his liege children that "they were making a sooty kitchen in their inward parts, soiling and infecting them with an unctuous kind of soot, as hath been found in some great tobacco-eaters, that after their death were opened." The information was perhaps a pious fraud. This tract, which has incurred so much ridicule, was, in truth, a meritorious effort to allay the extravagance of the moment. But such popular excesses end themselves; and the royal author might have left the subject to the town-satirists of the day, who found the theme inexhaustible for ridicule or invective.

Coal.—The established use of our ordinary fuel, coal, may be ascribed to the scarcity of wood in the environs of the metropolis. Its recommendation was its cheapness, however it destroys everything about us. It has formed an artificial atmosphere which envelops the great capital, and it is acknowledged that a purer air has often proved fatal to him who, from early life, has only breathed in sulphur and smoke. Charles Fox once said to a friend, "I cannot live in the country; my constitution is not strong enough." Evelyn poured out a famous invective against "London smoke." "Imagine," he cries, "a solid tentorium or canopy over London, what a mass of smoke would then stick to it! This fuliginous crust now comes down every night on the streets, on our houses, the waters, and is taken into our bodies. On the water it leaves a thin web or pellicle of dust dancing upon the surface of it, as those who bathe in the Thames discern, and bring home on their bodies." Evelyn has detailed the gradual destruction it effects on every article of ornament and price; and "he heard in France, that those parts lying south-west of England, complain of being infected with smoke from our coasts, which injured their vines in flower." I have myself observed at Paris, that the books exposed to sale on stalls, however old they might be, retained their freshness, and were in no instance like our own, corroded and blackened, which our coal-smoke never fails to produce. There was a proclamation, so far back as Edward the First, forbidding the use of sea-coal in the suburbs, on a complaint of the nobility and gentry, that they could not go to London on account of the noisome smell and thick air. About 1550, Hollingshed foresaw the general use of sea-coal from the neglect of cultivating timber. Coal fires have now been in general use for three centuries. In the country they persevered in using wood and peat. Those who were accustomed to this sweeter smell, declared that they always knew a Londoner, by the smell of his clothes, to have come from coal-fires. It must be acknowledged that our custom of using coal for our fuel has prevailed over good reasons why we ought not to have preferred it. But man accommodates himself even to an offensive thing, whenever his interest predominates.

Were we to carry on a speculation of this nature into graver topics, we should have a copious chapter to write of the opposition to new discoveries. Medical history supplies no unimportant number. On the improvements in anatomy by Malpighi and his followers, the senior professors of the university of Bononia were inflamed to such a pitch, that they attempted to insert an additional clause in the solemn oath taken by the graduates, to the effect that they would not permit the principles and conclusions of Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Galen, which had been approved of so many ages, to be overturned by any person. In phlebotomy we have a curious instance. In Spain, to the sixteenth century, they maintained that when the pain was on the one side they ought to bleed on the other. A great physician insisted on a contrary practice; a civil war of opinion divided Spain; at length they had recourse to courts of law; the novelists were condemned; they appealed to the emperor, Charles the Fifth; he was on the point of confirming the decree of the court, when the Duke of Savoy died of a pleurisy, having been legitimately bled. This puzzled the emperor, who did not venture on a decision.

The introduction of antimony and the jesuits' bark also provoked legislative interference; decrees and ordinances were issued, and a civil war raged among the medical faculty, of which Guy Patin is the copious historian. Vesalius was incessantly persecuted by the public prejudices against dissec-

tion; Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood led to so protracted a controversy, that the great discovery was hardly admitted even in the latter days of the old man; Lady Wortley Montague's introduction of the practice of inoculation met the same obstinate resistance as, more recently, that of vaccination startled the people. Thus objects, of the highest importance to mankind, on their first appearance are slighted and contemned. Posterity smiles at the ineptitude of the preceding age, while it becomes familiar with those objects which that age has so eagerly rejected. Time is a tardy patron of true knowledge.

A nobler theme is connected with the principle we have here but touched on—the gradual changes in public opinion—the utter annihilation of false notions, like those of witchcraft, astrology, spectres, and many other superstitions of no remote date, the hideous progeny of imposture got on ignorance, and audacity on fear. But one impostor reigns paramount, the plausible opposition to novel doctrines which may be subversive of some ancient ones; doctrines which probably shall one day be as generally established as at present they are utterly decried, and which the interests of corporate bodies oppose with all their cumbrous machinery; but artificial machinery becomes perplexed in its movements when worn out by the friction of ages.

DOMESTICITY; OR, A DISSERTATION ON SERVANTS.

The characteristics of servants have been usually known by the broad caricatures of the satirists of every age, and chiefly by the most popular—the writers of comedy. According to these exhibitions, we must infer that the vices of the menial are necessarily inherent to his condition, and consequently that this vast multitude in society remain ever in an irrecoverably ungovernable state. We discover only the cunning depredator of the household; the tip-toe spy, at all corners—all ear, all eye: the parasitical knave—the flatterer of the follies, and even the eager participator of the crimes, of his superior. The morality of servants has not been improved by the wonderful revelations of Swift's "Directions," where the irony is too refined, while it plainly inculcates the practice. This celebrated tract, designed for the instruction of the masters, is more frequently thumbed in the kitchen, as a manual for the profligate domestic. Servants have acknowledged, that some of their base doings have been suggested to them by their renowned satirist.

Bentham imagined, that were all the methods employed by thieves and rogues described and collected together, such a compilation of their artifices and villanies would serve to put us on our guard. The theorist of legislation seems often to forget the metaphysical state of man. With the vitiated mind, that latent sympathy of evil which might never have been called forth but by the occasion, has often evinced how too close an inspection of crime may grow into criminality itself. Hence it is, that when some monstrous and unusual crime has been revealed to the public, it rarely passes without a sad repetition. A link in the chain of the intellect is struck, and a crime is perpetrated which else had not occurred.

Listen to the counsels which one of the livery gives a brother, more stupid but more innocent than himself. I take the passage from that extraordinary Spanish comedy, in twenty-five acts, the "Spanish Bawd." It was no doubt designed to expose the arts and selfishness of the domestic, yet we should regret that the "Spanish Bawd" was as generally read by servants as Swift's "Directions."

"Serve not your master with this foolish loyalty and ignorant honesty, thinking to find firmness on a false foundation, as most of these masters now-a-days are. Gain friends, which is a during and lasting commodity; live not on hopes, relying on the vain promises of masters. The masters love more themselves than their servants, nor do they amiss; and the like love ought servants to bear to themselves. Liberality was lost long ago—rewards are grown out of date. Every one is now for himself, and makes the best he can of his servant's service, serving his turn, and therefore they ought to do the same, for they are less in substance. Thy master is one who befools his servants, and wears them out to the very stumps, looking for much service at their hands. Thy master cannot be thy friend, such difference is there of estate and condition between you two."

This passage, written two centuries ago, would find an echo of its sentiments in many a modern domestic. These notions are sacred traditions among the livery. We may trace them from Terence and Plautus, as well as Swift and Mandeville. Our latter great cynic has left a frightful picture of the state of the domestics, when it seems "they had experienced professors among them, who could instruct the graduates in iniquity seven hundred illiberal arts how to cheat, impose upon, and find out the blind side of their masters." The footmen, in Mandeville's day, had entered into a society together, and made laws to regulate their wages, and not to carry burdens above two or three pounds weight, and a common fund was provided to maintain any suit at law against any rebellious master. This seems to be a confederacy which is by no means dissolved.

Lord Chesterfield advises his son not to allow

his upper man to doff his livery, though this valet was to attend his person, when the toilette was a serious avocation requiring a more delicate hand and a nicer person than he who was to walk before his chair, or climb behind his coach. This searching genius of philosophy and *les petites mœurs* solemnly warned that if ever this man were to cast off the badge of his order, he never would resume it. About this period the masters were menaced by a sort of servile war. The famous farce of "High Life below Stairs" exposed with great happiness the impudence and the delinquencies of the parti-coloured clans. It roused them into the most barefaced opposition; and as ever happens to the few who press unjust claims on the many, in the result worked the reform they so greatly dreaded. One of the grievances in society was then an anomalous custom, for it was only practised in our country, of a guest being highly taxed in dining with a family whose establishment admitted of a numerous train. Watchful of the departure of the guest, this victim had to pass along a line of domestics, arranged in the hall, each man presenting the visitor with some separate article, of hat, gloves, coat and cane, claiming their "vails." It would not have been safe to refuse even those who, with nothing to present, still held out the hand, for their attentions to the diner-out.

When a slave was deemed not a person, but a thing marketable and transferable, the single principle judged sufficient to regulate the mutual conduct of the master and the domestic was, to command and to obey. It seems still the sole stipulation exacted by the haughty from the menial. But this feudal principle, unalleviated by the just sympathies of domesticity, deprives authority of its grace, and service of its zeal. To be served well, we should be loved a little; the command of an excellent master is even grateful, for the good servant delights to be useful. The slave repines, and such is the domestic destitute of any personal attachment for his master. Whoever was mindful of the interests of him whose beneficence is only a sacrifice to his pomp? The master dresses and wages highly his pampered train; but this is the calculated cost of state-liveries, of men measured by a standard, for a Hercules in the hall, or an Adonis for the drawing-room; but at those times when the domestic ceases to be an object in the public eye, he sinks into an object of sordid economy, or of merciless caprice. His personal feelings are recklessly neglected. He sleeps where there is neither light nor air; he is driven when he is already exhausted: he begins the work of midnight, and is confined for hours with men like himself, who fret, repine, and curse. They have their tales to compare together; their unhallowed secrets to disclose. The masters and the mistresses pass by them in review, and little deem they how oft the malignant glance or the malicious whisper follow their airy steps. To shorten such tedious hours, the servants familiarise themselves with every vicious indulgence, for even the occupation of such domestics is little more than a dissolute idleness. A cell in Newgate does not always contain more corruptors than a herd of servants congregated in our winter halls. It is to be lamented that the modes of fashionable life demand the most terrible sacrifices of the health, the happiness, and the morals of servants. Whoever perceives that he is held in no esteem, stands degraded in his own thoughts. The heart of the simple throbs with this emotion; but it hardens the villain who would rejoice to avenge himself: it makes the artful only the more cunning; it extorts from the sullen a cold unwilling obedience, and it stings even the good-tempered into insolence.

South, as great a wit as a preacher, has separated, by an awful interval, the superior and the domestic. "A servant dwells remote from all knowledge of his lord's purposes; he lives as a kind of foreigner under the same roof; a domestic, yet a foreigner too." This exhibits a picture of feudal manners. But the progress of society in modern Europe has since passed through a mighty evolution. In the visible change of habits, of feelings, of social life, the humble domestic has approximated to, and communicated more frequently even with "his lord." The domestic is now not always a stranger to "his lord's purposes;" but often their faithful actor — their confidential counsellor — the mirror in which his lordship contemplates on his wishes personified.

This reflection, indeed, would have violated the dignity of the noble friend of Swift, Lord Orrery. His lordship censures the laugher in "Rabelais' easy chair" for having directed such intense attention to affairs solely relating to servants. "Let him jest with dignity, and let him be ironical upon *useful* subjects, leaving *poor slaves* to eat their porridge, or drink their small-beer, in such vessels as they shall think proper." This lordly criticism has drawn down the lightning of Sir Walter Scott:—"The noble lord's feelings of dignity deemed nothing worthy of attention that was unconnected with the highest orders of society." Such, in truth, was too long the vicious principle of those monopolists of personal distinction, the mere men of elevated rank.

Metropolitan servants, trained in depravity, are incapacitated to comprehend how far the personal interests of servants are folded up with the interests of the house they inhabit. They are

unconscious that they have any share in the welfare of the superior, save in the degree that the prosperity of the master contributes to the base and momentary purposes of the servant. But in small communities we perceive how the affections of the master and the domestic may take root. Look in an ancient retired family, whose servants often have been born under the roof they inhabit, and where the son is serving where the father still serves, and sometimes call the sacred spot of their cradle and their grave by the proud and endearing term of "our house." We discover this in whole countries where luxury has not removed the classes of society at too wide distances from each other, to deaden their sympathies. We behold this in agrestic Switzerland, among its villages and its pastures; in France, among its distant provinces; in Italy, in some of its decayed cities; and in Germany, where simple manners and strong affections mark the inhabitants of certain localities. Holland long preserved its primitive customs; and there the love of order promotes subordination, though its free institutions have softened the distinctions in the ranks of life, and there we find a remarkable evidence of domesticity. It is not unusual in Holland for servants to call their masters uncle, their mistresses aunt, and the children of the family their cousins. These domestics participating in the comforts of the family, become naturalised and domiciliated; and their extraordinary relatives are often adopted by the heart. An heroic effort of these domestics has been recorded; it occurred at the burning of the theatre at Amsterdam, where many rushed into the flames, and nobly perished in the attempt to save their endeared families.

It is in limited communities that the domestic virtues are most intense; all concentrating themselves in their private circles, in such localities there is no public,—no public which extorts so many sacrifices from the individual. Insular situations are usually remarkable for the warm attachment and devoted fidelity of the domestic, and the personal regard of families for their servants. This genuine domesticity is strikingly displayed in the island of Ragusa, on the coast of Dalmatia; for there they provide for the happiness of the humble friends of the house. Boys, at an early age, are received into families, educated in writing, reading, and arithmetic. Some only quit their abode, in which they were almost born, when tempted by the stirring spirit of maritime enterprise. They form a race of men who are much sought after for servants; and the term applied to them of "Men of the Gulf," is a sure recommendation of character for unlimited trust and unwearying zeal.

The mode of providing for the future comforts of their maidens is a little incident in the history of benevolence, which we must regret is only practised in such limited communities. Malte-Brun, in his "Annales des Voyages," has painted a scene of this nature, which may read like some romance of real life. The girls, after a service of ten years, on one great holiday, an epoch in their lives, receive the ample reward of their good conduct. On that happy day, the mistress and all the friends of the family prepare for the maiden a sort of dowry or marriage-portion. Every friend of the house sends some article; and the mistress notes down the gifts, that she may return the same on a similar occasion. The donations consist of silver, of gowns, of handkerchiefs, and other useful articles for a young woman. These tributes of friendship are placed beside a silver basin, which contains the annual wages of the servant; her relatives from the country come, accompanied by music, carrying baskets covered with ribbons and loaded with fruits, and other rural delicacies. They are received by the master himself, who invites them to the feast, where the company assemble, and particularly the ladies. All the presents are reviewed. The servant introduced, kneels to receive the benediction of her mistress, whose grateful task is then to deliver a solemn enumeration of her good qualities, concluding by announcing to the maiden, that having been brought up in the house, if it be her choice to remain, from henceforwards she shall be considered as one of the family. Tears of affection often fall during this beautiful scene of true domesticity, which terminates with a ball for the servants, and another for the superiors. The relatives of the maiden return homewards with their joyous musicians; and, if the maiden prefer her old domestic abode, she receives an increase of wages, and at a succeeding period of six years, another jubilee provides her second good fortune. Let me tell one more story of the influence of this passion of domesticity in the servant;—its merit equals its novelty. In that inglorious attack on Buenos Ayres, where our brave soldiers were disgraced by a recreant general, the negroes, slaves as they were, joined the inhabitants to expel their invaders. On this signal occasion, the city decreed a public expression of their gratitude to the negroes, in a sort of triumph, and at the same time awarded the freedom of eighty of their leaders. One of them having shown his claims to the boon, declared, that to obtain his freedom had all his days formed the proud object of his wishes; his claim was indisputable; yet now, however, to the amazement of the judges, he refused his proffered freedom! The reason he alleged was a singular refinement of heartfelt sensibility:—"My kind mistress," said the negro,

"once wealthy, has fallen into misfortunes in her infirm old age. I work to maintain her, and at intervals of leisure she leans on my arm to take the evening air. I will not be tempted to abandon her, and I renounce the hope of freedom that she may know she possesses a slave who never will quit her side."

Although I have been travelling out of Europe to furnish some striking illustrations of the powerful emotion of domesticity, it is not that we are without instances in the private history of families among ourselves. I have known more than one where the servant has chosen to live without wages, rather than quit the master or the mistress in their decayed fortunes; and another where the servant cheerfully worked to support her old lady to her last day.

Would we look on a very opposite mode of servitude, turn to the United States. No system of servitude was ever so preposterous. A crude notion of popular freedom in the equality of ranks abolished the very designation of "servant," substituting the fantastic term of "helps." If there be any meaning left in this barbarous neologism, their aid amounts to little; their engagements are made by the week, and they often quit their domicile without the slightest intimation.

Let none, in the plenitude of pride and egotism, imagine that they exist independent of the virtues of their domestics. The good conduct of the servant stamps a character on the master. In the sphere of domestic life they must frequently come in contact with them. On this subordinate class, how much the happiness and even the welfare of the master may rest! The gentle offices of servitude began in his cradle, and await him at all seasons and all spots, in pleasure or in peril. Feelingly observes Sir Walter Scott, "In a free country an individual's happiness is more immediately connected with the personal character of his valet, than with that of the monarch himself." Let the reflection not be deemed extravagant, if I venture to add, that the habitual obedience of a devoted servant is a more immediate source of personal comfort than even the delightfulness of friendship and the tenderness of relatives,—for these are but periodical; but the unbidden zeal of the domestic, intimate with our habits, and patient of our waywardness, labours for us at all hours. It is those feet which hasten to us in our solitude; it is those hands which silently administer to our wants. At what period of life are even the great exempt from the gentle offices of servitude?

Faithful servants have never been commemorated by more heartfelt affection than by those whose pursuits require a perfect freedom from domestic cares. Persons of sedentary occupations, and undisturbed habits, abstracted from the daily business of life, must yield unlimited trust to the honesty, while they want the hourly attentions and all the cheerful zeal, of the thoughtful domestic. The mutual affections of the master and the servant have often been exalted into a companionship of feelings.

When Madame de Genlis heard that POPE had raised a monument not only to his father and to his mother, but also to the faithful servant who had nursed his earliest years, she was so suddenly struck by the fact, that she declared that "This monument of gratitude is the more remarkable for its singularity, as I know of no other instance." Our churchyards would have afforded her a vast number of tomb-stones erected by grateful masters to faithful servants *; and a closer intimacy with the domestic privacy of many public characters might have displayed the same splendid examples. The one which appears to have so strongly affected her may be found on the east end of the outside of the parish-church of Twickenham. The stone bears this inscription:—

To the memory of Mary Beach,
who died November 5, 1725, aged 78,
Alexander Pope,
whom she nursed in his infancy,
and constantly attended for thirty-eight years,
Erected this stone
In gratitude to a faithful Servant.

The original portrait of SHENSTONE was the votive gift of a master to his servant; for on its back, written by the poet's own hand, is the following dedication:—"This picture belongs to Mary Cutler, given her by her master, William Shenstone, January 1st, 1754, in acknowledgment of her native genius, her magnanimity, her tenderness, and her fidelity.—W. S." We might refer to many similar evidences of the domestic gratitude of such masters to old and attached servants. Some of these tributes may be familiar to most readers. The solemn author of the "Night Thoughts" inscribed an epitaph over the grave of his man-servant; the caustic GIFFORD poured forth an effusion to the memory of a female servant, fraught with a melancholy tenderness which his muse rarely indulged.

The most pathetic, we had nearly said and had said justly, the most sublime, development of this devotion of a master to his servant, is a letter addressed by that powerful genius MICHAEL ANGELO to his friend Vasari, on the death of Urbino, an old and beloved servant. Published only in the voluminous collection of the letters of

* Even our modern cemeteries perpetuate this feeling, and exhibit many grateful EPITAPHS ON SERVANTS.

Painters, by Bottari, it seems to have escaped general notice. We venture to translate it in despair: for we feel that we must weaken its masculine yet tender eloquence.

MICHAEL ANGELO TO VASARI.

"My dear George,

"I can but write ill, yet shall not your letter remain without my saying something. You know how Urbino has died. Great was the grace of God when he bestowed on me this man, though now heavy be the grievance and infinite the grief. The grace was that when he lived he kept me living; and in dying he has taught me to die, not n sorrow and with regret, but with a fervent desire of death. Twenty and six years had he served me, and I found him a most rare and faithful man; and now that I had made him rich, and expected to lean on him as the staff and the repose of my old age, he is taken from me, and no other hope remains than that of seeing him again in Paradise. A sign of God was this happy death to him; yet even more than this death, were his regrets increased to leave me in this world the wretch of many anxieties, since the better half of myself has departed with him, and nothing is left for me than this loneliness of life."

Even the throne has not been too far removed from this sphere of humble humanity, for we discover in St. George's Chapel a mural monument erected by order of one of our late sovereigns as the memorial of a female servant of a favourite daughter. The inscription is a tribute of domestic affection in a royal bosom, where an attached servant became a cherished inmate.

King George III.
Caused to be interred near this place
The body of Mary Gascoigne,
Servant to the Princess Amelia;
and this stone
to be inscribed in testimony of his grateful sense
of the faithful services and attachment
of an amiable young woman
to
his beloved Daughter.

This deep emotion for the tender offices of servitude is not peculiar to the refinement of our manners, or to modern Europe; it is not the charity of Christianity alone which has hallowed this sensibility, and confessed this equality of affection, which the domestic may participate: monumental inscriptions, raised by grateful masters to the merits of their slaves, have been preserved in the great collections of Grævius and Gruter.

PRINTED LETTERS IN THE VERNACULAR IDIOM.

Printed Letters without any attention to the selection is so great a literary evil, that it has excited my curiosity to detect the first modern who obtruded such formless things on public attention. I conjectured that whoever he might be, he would be distinguished for his egotism and his knavery. My hypothetical criticism turned out to be correct. Nothing less than the audacity of the unblushing Pietro Aretino could have adventured on this project; he claims the honour, and the critics do not deny it, of being the first who published Italian letters. Aretino had the hardihood to dedicate one volume of his letters to the King of England, another to the Duke of Florence; a third to Hercules of Este, a relative of Pope Julius Third,—evidently insinuating that his letters were worthy to be read by the royal and the noble.

Among these letters there is one addressed to Mary, Queen of England, on her resuscitation of the ancient faith, which offers a very extraordinary catalogue of the ritual and ceremonies of the Romish church. It is indeed impossible to translate into Protestant English, the multiplied nomenclature of offices which involve human life in never-ceasing service. As I know not where we can find so clear a perspective of this amazing contrivance to fetter with religious ceremonies the freedom of the human mind, I present the reader with an accurate translation of it.

"*Pietro Aretino to the Queen of England.*

"The voices of Psalms, the sound of Canticles, the breath of Epistles, and the Spirit of Gospels, had need unloose the language of my words in congratulating your superhuman Majesty on having not only restored conscience to the minds and hearts of Englishmen and taken deceitful heresy away from them, but on bringing it to pass, when it was least hoped for, that charity and faith were again born and raised up in them; on which sudden conversion triumphs our sovereign Pontiff Julius, the College and the whole of the clergy, so that it seems in Rome as if the shades of the old Cæsars with visible effect showed it in their very statues; meanwhile the pure mind of his most blessed Holiness canonizes you, and marks you in the catalogue among the Catharines and Margarets, and dedicates you," &c.

"The stupor of so stupendous a miracle is not the stupefaction of stupid wonder; and all proceeds from your being in the grace of God in every deed, whose incomprehensible goodness is pleased with seeing you, in holiness of life and innocence of heart, cause to be restored in those

proud countries, solemnity to Easters, abstinence to Lents, sobriety to Fridays, parsimony to Saturdays, fulfilment to vows, fasts to vigils, observances to seasons, chrism to creatures, unction to the dying, festivals to saints, images to churches, masses to altars, lights to lamps, organs to quires, benedictions to olives, robings to sacristies, and decencies to baptisms; and that nothing may be wanting (thanks to your pious and most entire nature,) possession has been regained to offices of hours; to ceremonies, of incense; to reliques, of shrines; to the confessed, of absolutions; to priests, of habits; to preachers, of pulpits; to ecclesiastics, of pre-eminences; to scriptures, of interpreters; to hosts, of communions; to the poor, of alms; to the wretched, of hospitals; to virgins, of monasteries; to fathers, of convents; to the clergy, of orders; to the defunct, of obsequies; to tierces, noons, vespers, complins, ave-maries and matins, the privileges of daily and nightly bells."

The fortunate temerity of Aretino gave birth to subsequent publications by more skilful writers. Nicolo Franco closely followed, who had at first been the amanuensis of Aretino, then his rival, and concluded his literary adventures by being hanged at Rome; a circumstance which at the time must have occasioned regret that Franco had not, in this respect also, been an imitator of his original, a man equally feared, flattered and despised.

The greatest personages and the most esteemed writers of that age were perhaps pleased to have discovered a new and easy path to fame; and since it was ascertained that a man might become celebrated by writings never intended for the press, and which it was never imagined could confer fame on the writers, volumes succeeded volumes, and some authors are scarcely known to posterity but as letter-writers. We have the too elaborate epistles of Bembo, secretary to Leo X. and the more elegant correspondence of Annibal Caro; a work which, though posthumous and published by an affectionate nephew, and therefore too undiscerning a publisher, is a model of familiar letters.

These collections being found agreeable to the taste of their readers, novelty was courted by composing letters more expressly adapted to public curiosity. The subjects were now diversified by critical and political topics, till at length they descended to one more level with the faculties, and more grateful to the passions of the populace of readers—Love! Many grave personages had already, without being sensible of the ridiculous, languished through tedious odes and starch sonnets. Doni, a bold literary projector, who invented a literary review both of printed and manuscript works, with not inferior ingenuity published his *love-letters*; and with the felicity of an Italian diminutive, he fondly entitled them "Pistolette Amorose del Doni, 1552, 8vo." These Pistole, were designed to be little epistles, or billets-doux, but Doni was one of those fertile authors who have too little time of their own, to compose short works. Doni was too facetious to be sentimental, and his quill was not plucked from the wing of Love. He was followed by a graver pedant, who threw a heavy offering on the altar of the Graces; Parabosco, who in six books of "Lettere Amorose, 1565, 8vo." was too phlegmatic to sigh over his ink-stand.

Denina mentions Lewis Pasqualigo of Venice as an improver of these amatory epistles, by introducing a deeper interest and a more complicate narrative. Partial to the Italian literature, Denina considers this author as having given birth to those *novels* in the form of *letters*, with which modern Europe has been inundated; and he refers the curious in literary researches, for the precursors of these *epistolary novels*, to the works of those Italian wits who flourished in the sixteenth century.

"The Worlds" of Doni, and the numerous whimsical works of Ortensio Landi, and the Circe of Gelli, of which we have more than one English translation, which under their fantastic inventions cover the most profound philosophical views, have been considered the precursors of the finer genius of "The Persian Letters," that fertile mother of a numerous progeny, of D'Argens and others.

The Italians are justly proud of some valuable collections of letters, which seem peculiar to themselves, and which may be considered as the works of *artists*. They have a collection of "Lettere di Tredici Uomini Illustri," which appeared in 1571; another more curious, relating to princes—"Lettere de' Principi le quali o si scrivono da Principi a Principi, o ragionano di Principi; Venezia, 1581," in 3 vols. quarto.

But a treasure of this kind, peculiarly interesting to the artist, has appeared in more recent times, in seven quarto volumes, consisting of the original letters of the great painters, from the golden age of Leo X., gradually collected by Bottari, who published them in separate volumes. They abound in the most interesting facts relative to the arts, and display the characteristic traits of their lively writers. Every artist will turn over with delight and curiosity these genuine effusions; chronicles of the dreams of the days and the nights of their vivacious brothers.

It is a little remarkable that he who claims to be the first satirist in the English language, claims also, more justly perhaps, the honour of being the first author who published familiar letters. In the

dedication of his Epistles to prince Henry, the son of James the First, Bishop HALL claims the honour of introducing "this new fashion of discourse by epistles, new to our language, usual to others; and as novelty is never without plea of use, more free, more familiar." Of these epistles, in six decades, many were written during his travels. We have a collection of Donne's letters abounding with his peculiar points, at least witty if not natural.

As we became a literary nation, familiar letters served as a vehicle for the fresh feelings of our first authors. Howell, whose Epistolæ bear his name, takes a wider circumference in "Familiar Letters, domestic and foreign, historical, political, and philosophical, upon emergent occasions." The "emergent occasions" the lively writer found in his long confinement in the Fleet, that English Parnassus! Howell is a wit, who, in writing his own history, has written that of his own times; he is one of the few whose genius, striking in the heat of the moment only current coin, produce finished medals for the cabinet. His letters are still published. The taste which had now arisen for collecting letters, induced Sir Tobie Mathews, in 1660, to form a volume, of which many, if not all, are genuine productions of their different writers.

The dissipated elegance of Charles II. inspired freedom in letter-writing. The royal emigrant had caught the tone of Voiture. We have some few letters of the wits of this court, but that school of writers, having sinned in gross materialism, the reaction produced another of a more spiritual nature, in a romantic strain of the most refined sentiment. Volumes succeeded volumes from pastoral and heroic minds. Katherine Philips, in the masquerade-dress of "The matchless Orinda," addressed Sir Charles Cottrel her grave "Poliarchus;" while Mrs. Behn, in her loose dress, assuming the nymph-like form of "Astræa," pursued a gentleman, concealed in a domino, under the name of "Lycidas."

Before our letters reached to nature and truth, they were strained by one more effort after novelty; a new species appeared, "From the Dead to the Living," by Mrs. Rowe: they obtained celebrity. She was the first who, to gratify the public taste, adventured beyond the Styx; the caprice of public favour has returned them to the place whence they came.

The letters of Pope were unquestionably written for the public eye. Partly accident, and partly persevering ingenuity, extracted from the family chests the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who long remained the model of letter-writing. The letters of Hughes and of Shenstone, of Gray, Cowper and Walpole, and others, self-painters, whose indelible colours have given an imperishable charm to these fragments of the human mind, may close our subject; printed familiar letters now enter into the history of our literature.

END OF LITERARY MISCELLANIES.

CALAMITIES OF AUTHORS:

INCLUDING

SOME INQUIRIES RESPECTING THEIR MORAL AND LITERARY CHARACTERS.

"Such a superiority do the pursuits of Literature possess above every other occupation, that even he who attains but a mediocrity in them, merits the pre-eminence above those that excel the most in the common and vulgar professions."—HUME.

PREFACE.

THE Calamities of Authors have often excited the attention of the lovers of literature; and, from the revival of letters to this day, this class of the community, the most ingenious and the most enlightened, have, in all the nations of Europe, been the most honoured, and the least remunerated. Pierius Valerianus, an attendant in the literary court of Leo X., who twice refused a bishopric that he might pursue his studies uninterrupted, was a friend of Authors, and composed a small work, "De Infelicitate Literatorum," which has been frequently reprinted*. It forms a catalogue of several Italian literati, his contemporaries; a meagre performance, in which the author shows sometimes a predilection for the marvellous, which happens so rarely in human affairs; and he is so unphilosophical, that he places among the misfortunes of literary men, those fatal casualties to which all men are alike liable. Yet even this small volume has its value; for although the historian confines his narrative to his own times, he includes a sufficient number of names to convince us that to devote our life to authorship is not the true means of improving our happiness or our fortune.

At a later period, a congenial work was composed by Theophilus Spizelius, a German divine; his four volumes are after the fashion of his country and his times, which could make even small things ponderous. In 1680 he first published two volumes, entitled "Infelix Literatus," and five years afterwards his "Felicissimus Literatus;" he writes without size, and sermonises without end, and seems to have been so grave a lover of symmetry, that he shapes his *Felicities* just with the same measure as his *Infelicities*. These two equalised bundles of hay might have held in suspense the casuistical ass of Sterne, till he had died from want of a motive to choose either. Yet Spizelius is not to be contemned because he is verbose and heavy; he has reflected more deeply than Valerianus, by opening the moral causes of those calamities which he describes†.

The chief object of the present work is to ascertain some doubtful yet important points concerning Authors. The title of Author still retains its seduction among our youth, and is consecrated by ages. Yet what affectionate parent would consent to see his son devote himself to his pen as a profession? The studies of a true Author insulate him in society, exacting daily labours; yet he will receive but little encouragement, and less remuneration. It will be found that the most successful Author can obtain no equivalent for the labours of his life. I have endeavoured to ascertain this fact, to develop the causes and to paint the variety of evils that naturally result from the disappointments of genius. Authors themselves never discover this melancholy truth, till they have yielded to an impulse, and adopted a profession, too late in life to resist the one, or abandon the other. Whoever labours without hope, a painful state to which Authors are at length reduced, may surely be placed among the most injured class in the community. Most authors close their lives in apathy or despair, and too many live by means which few of them would not blush to describe.

Besides this perpetual struggle with penury, there are also moral causes which influence the literary character. I have drawn the individual characters and feelings of authors from their own

* A modern writer observes, that "Valeriano is chiefly known to the present times by his brief but curious and interesting work, *De Literatorum Infelicitate*, which has preserved many anecdotes of the principal scholars of the age, not elsewhere to be found."—Roscoe's *Leo X.* vol. iv. p. 175.

† There is also a bulky collection of this kind, entitled, *Analecta de Calamitate Literatorum*, edited by Mencken, the author of *Charlatanerie Eruditorum*.

confessions, or deduced them from the prevalent events of their lives; and often discovered them in their secret history, as it floats on tradition, or lies concealed in authentic and original documents. I would paint what has not been unhappily called the *psychological* character*.

I have limited my inquiries to our own country, and generally to recent times; for researches more curious, and eras more distant, would less forcibly act on our sympathy. If, in attempting to avoid the naked brevity of Valerianus, I have taken a more comprehensive view of several of our authors, it has been with the hope that I was throwing a new light on their characters, or contributing some fresh materials to our literary history. I feel anxious for the fate of the opinions and the feelings which have arisen in the progress and diversity of this work; but whatever their errors may be, it is to them that my readers at least owe the materials of which it is formed; these materials will be received with consideration, as the confessions and statements of genius itself. In mixing them with my own feelings, let me apply a beautiful apologue of the Hebrews—"The clusters of grapes sent out of Babylon, implore favour for the exuberant leaves of the vine; for had there been no leaves, you had lost the grapes."

* From the Grecian *Psyche*, or the soul, the Germans have borrowed this expressive term. They have a *Psychological Magasine*. Some of our own recent authors have adopted the term peculiarly adapted to the historian of the human mind.

THE

CALAMITIES OF AUTHORS.

AUTHORS BY PROFESSION.

GUTHRIE AND AMHURST—DRAKE—SMOLLETT.

A GREAT author once surprised me by inquiring what I meant by "an Author by Profession." He seemed offended at the supposition that I was creating an odious distinction between authors, I was only placing it among their calamities.

The title of AUTHOR is venerable; and in the ranks of national glory, authors mingle with its heroes and its patriots. It is indeed by our authors that foreigners have been taught most to esteem us; and this remarkably appears in the expression of Gemelli, the Italian traveller round the world, who wrote about the year 1700; for he told all Europe that "he could find nothing amongst us but our writings to distinguish us from the worst of barbarians." But to become an "Author by Profession," is to have no other means of subsistence, than such as are extracted from the quill; and no one believes these to be so precarious as they really are, until disappointed, distressed, and thrown out of every pursuit which can maintain independence, the noblest mind is cast into the lot of a doomed labourer.

Literature abounds with instances of "Authors by Profession" accommodating themselves to this condition. By vile artifices of faction and popularity their moral sense is injured, and the literary character sits in that study which he ought to dignify, merely, as one of them sings,

"To keep his mutton twirling at the fire."

Another has said, "He is a fool who is a grain honester than the times he lives in."

Let it not, therefore, be conceived that I mean to degrade or vilify the literary character, when I would only separate the Author from those pollutors of the press, who have turned a vestal into a prostitute; a grotesque race of famished buffoons or laughing assassins; or that populace of unhappy beings, who are driven to perish in their garrets, unknown and unregarded by all, for illusions which even their calamities cannot disperse. Poverty, said an ancient, is a sacred thing—it is, indeed, so sacred, that it creates a sympathy even for those who have incurred it by their folly, or plead by it for their crimes.

The history of our Literature is instructive—let us trace the origin of characters of this sort among us: some of them have happily disappeared, and, whenever great authors obtain their due rights, the calamities of literature will be greatly diminished.

As for the phrase of "Authors by Profession," it is said to be of modern origin; and GUTHRIE, a great dealer in literature, and a political scribe, is thought to have introduced it, as descriptive of a class of writers which he wished to distinguish from the general term. I present the reader with an unpublished letter of Guthrie, in which the phrase will not only be found, but, what is more important, which exhibits the character in its degraded form. It was addressed to a minister.

"My Lord, *June* 3, 1762.

"In the year 1745-6, Mr. Pelham, then first Lord of the Treasury, acquainted me, that it was his Majesty's pleasure I should receive, till better provided for, which never has happened, 200*l.* a-year, to be paid by him and his successors in the Treasury. I was satisfied with the august name made use of, and the appointment has been regularly and quarterly paid me ever since. I have been equally punctual in doing the government all the services that fell within my abilities or sphere of life, especially in those critical situations that call for unanimity in the service of the crown.

"Your Lordship may possibly now suspect that *I am an Author by Profession:* you are not deceived; and will be less so, if you believe that I

am disposed to serve his Majesty under your Lordship's *future patronage and protection, with greater zeal if possible than ever.*

"I have the honour to be,
"My Lord, &c.
"WILLIAM GUTHRIE."

Unblushing venality! In one part he shouts like a plundering hussar who has carried off his prey; and in the other he bows with the tame suppleness of the "quarterly" Swiss chaffering his halbert for his price;—"to serve his Majesty" for—"his Lordship's future patronage."

Guthrie's notion of "An Author by Profession," entirely derived from his own character, was two-fold; literary task-work, and political degradation. He was to be a gentleman convertible into an historian, at——per sheet; and, when he had not time to write histories, he chose to sell his name to those he never wrote.—These are mysteries of the craft of authorship; in this sense it is only a trade, and a very bad one! But when in his other capacity, this gentleman comes to hire himself to one lord as he had to another, no one can doubt that the stipendiary would change his principles with his livery *.

Such have been some of the "Authors by Profession" who have worn the literary mask; for literature was not the first object of their designs. They form a race peculiar to our country. They opened their career in our first great revolution, and flourished during the eventful period of the civil wars. In the form of newspapers, their "Mercuries" and "Diurnals" were political pamphlets†. Of these, the royalists, being the better educated, carried off to their side all the spirit, and only left the foam and dregs for the parliamentarians; otherwise, in lying, they were just like one another; for "the father of lies" seems to be of no party! Were it desirable to instruct men by a system of political and moral calumny, the complete art might be drawn from these archives of political lying, during their flourishing era. We might discover principles among them which would have humbled the genius of Machiavel himself, and even have taught Mr. Sheridan's more popular scribe, Mr. Puff, a sense of his own inferiority.

It is known that, during the administration of Harley and Walpole, this class of authors swarmed and started up like mustard-seed in a hot-bed. More than fifty thousand pounds were expended among them! Faction, with mad and blind passions, can affix a value on the basest things that serve its purpose‡. These "Authors by Profession" wrote more assiduously the better they were paid; but as attacks only produced replies and rejoinders, to remunerate them was heightening the fever and feeding the disease. They were all fighting for present pay, with a view of the promised land before them; but they at length became so numerous, and so crowded on one another, that the minister could neither satisfy promised claims nor actual dues. He had not at last the humblest office to bestow, not a commissionership of wine licences, as Tacitus Gordon had: not even a collectorship of the customs in some obscure town, as was the wretched worn-out Oldmixon's pittance§; not a crumb for a mouse!

The captain of this banditti in the administration of Walpole was Arnall, a young attorney, whose mature genius for scurrilous party-papers broke forth in his tender nonage. This hireling was "The Free Briton," and in "The Gazetteer" *Francis Walsingham, Esq.*, abusing the name of a profound statesman. It is said, that he received above ten thousand pounds for his obscure labours; and this patriot was suffered to retire with all the dignity which a pension could confer. He not only wrote for hire, but valued himself on it; proud of the pliancy of his pen and of his principles, he wrote without remorse what his patron was forced to pay for, but to disavow. It was from a knowledge of these "Authors by Profession," writers of a faction in the name of the community, as they have been well described, that our great statesman Pitt fell into an error which he lived to regret. He did not distinguish between authors; he confounded the mercenary with the men of

* It has been lately disclosed that HOME, the author of "Douglas," was pensioned by Lord Bute to answer all the papers and pamphlets of the government, and to be a vigilant defender of the measures of government.

† I have elsewhere portrayed, the personal characters of the hireling chiefs of these paper wars: the versatile and unprincipled Marchmont Needham, the Cobbett of his day; the factious Sir Roger L'Estrange; and the bantering and profligate Sir John Birkenhead.

‡ An ample view of these lucubrations is exhibited in the early volumes of the Gentleman's Magazine.

§ It was said of this man that "he had submitted to labour at the press, like a horse in a mill, till he became as blind and as wretched." To show the extent of the conscience of this class of writers, and to what lengths mere party-writers can proceed, when duly encouraged, Oldmixon, who was a Whig historian, if a violent party-writer ought ever to be dignified by so venerable a title, unmercifully rigid to all other historians, was himself guilty of the crimes with which he so loudly accused others. He charged three eminent persons with interpolating Lord Clarendon's History; this charge was afterwards disproved by the passages being produced in his Lordship's own hand-writting, which had been fortunately preserved; and yet this accuser of interpolation, when employed by Bishop Kennett to publish his collection of our historians, made no scruple of falsifying numerous passages in Daniel's Chronicle, which makes the first edition of that collection of no value.

talent and character; and with this contracted view of the political influence of genius, he must have viewed with awe, perhaps with surprise, its mighty labour in the volumes of Burke.

But these "Authors by Profession" sometimes found a retribution of their crimes even from their masters. When the ardent patron was changed into a cold minister, their pen seemed wonderfully to have lost its point, and the feather could not any more tickle. They were flung off, as Shakespeare's striking imagery expresses it, like

> "An unregarded bulrush on the stream,
> To rot itself with motion."

Look on the fate and fortune of AMHURST. The life of this "Author by Profession" points a moral. He flourished about the year 1730. He passed through a youth of iniquity, and was expelled his college for his irregularities: he had exhibited no marks of regeneration when he assailed the university with the periodical paper of the *Terræ Filius*; a witty Saturnalian effusion on the manners and toryism of Oxford, where the portraits have an extravagant kind of likeness, and are so false and so true that they were universally relished and individually understood. Amhurst, having lost his character, hastened to reform the morals and politics of the nation. For near twenty years he toiled at "The Craftsman," of which ten thousand are said to have been sold in one day. Admire this patriot! an expelled collegian becomes an outrageous zealot for popular reform, and an intrepid Whig can bend to be yoked to all the drudgery of a faction! Amhurst succeeded in writing out the minister, and writing in Bolingbroke and Pulteney. Now came the hour of gratitude and generosity! His patrons mounted into power—but—they silently dropped the instrument of their ascension. The political prostitute stood shivering at the gate of preferment, which his masters had for ever flung against him. He died broken-hearted, and owed the charity of a grave to his bookseller.

I must add one more striking example, of a political author, in the case of Dr. JAMES DRAKE; a man of genius, and an excellent writer. He resigned an honourable profession, that of medicine, to adopt a very contrary one, that of becoming an author by profession for a party. As a tory writer, he dared every extremity of the law, while he evaded it by every subtlety of artifice; he sent a masked lady with his MS. to the printer, who was never discovered; and was once saved by a flaw in the indictment from the simple change of *r* for a *t*, or *nor* for *not*; one of those shameful evasions, by which the law, to its perpetual disgrace, so often protects the criminal from punishment. Dr. Drake had the honour of hearing himself censured from the throne; of being imprisoned; of seeing his "Memorials of the Church of England" burned at London, and his "Historia Anglo-Scotica" at Edinburgh. Having enlisted himself in the pay of the booksellers, among other works, I suspect, he condescended to practise some literary impositions. For he has reprinted Father Parsons's famous libel against the Earl of Leicester in Elizabeth's reign, under the title of "Secret Memoirs of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, 1706," 8vo, with a preface pretending it was printed from an old MS.

Drake was a lover of literature; he left behind him a version of Herodotus, and a "System of Anatomy," once the most popular and curious of its kind. After all this turmoil of his literary life, neither his masked lady nor the flaws in his indictments availed him.—Government brought a writ of error, severely prosecuted him; and, abandoned, as usual, by those for whom he had annihilated a genius which deserved a better fate, his perturbed spirit broke out into a fever, and he died raving against cruel persecutors, and patrons not much more humane.

So much for some of those who have been "Authors by Profession" in one of the two-fold capacities which Guthrie designed, that of writing for a minister; the other, that of writing for the bookseller, though far more honourable, is sufficiently calamitous.

In commercial times, the hope of profit is always a stimulating, but a degrading motive; it dims the clearest intellect, it stills the proudest feelings. Habit and prejudice will soon reconcile even genius to the work of money, and to avow the motive without a blush. "An author by profession," at once ingenious and ingenuous, declared that, "till fame appears to be worth more than money, he would always prefer money to fame." JOHNSON had a notion that there existed no motive for writing, but money! Yet, crowned heads have sighed with the ambition of authorship, though this great master of the human mind could suppose that on this subject men were not actuated either by the love of glory or of pleasure! FIELDING, an author of great genius and of "the profession," in one of his Covent-garden Journals asserts, that "An author, in a country where there is no public provision for men of genius, is not obliged to be a more disinterested patriot than any other. Why is he whose *livelihood is in his pen*, a greater monster in using it to serve himself, than he who uses his tongue for the same purpose?"

But it is a very important question to ask, Is this "livelihood in the pen" really such? Authors drudging on in obscurity, and enduring miseries which can never close but with their life—shall this be worth even the humble designation

of a "livelihood?" I am not now combating with them whether their task-work degrades them, but whether they are receiving an equivalent for the violation of their genius, for the weight of the fetters they are wearing, and for the entailed miseries which form an author's sole legacies to his widow and his children. Far from me is the wish to degrade literature by the inquiry; but it will be useful to many a youth of promising talent, who is impatient to abandon all professions for this one, to consider well the calamities in which he will most probably participate.

Among "Authors by Profession"—who has displayed a more fruitful genius, and exercised more intense industry, with a loftier sense of his independence, than SMOLLETT? But look into his life and enter into his feelings, and you will be shocked at the disparity of his situation with the genius of the man. His life was a succession of struggles, vexations, and disappointments, yet of success in his writings. Smollett, who is a great poet, though he has written little in verse, and whose rich genius composed the most original pictures of human life, was compelled by his wants to debase his name by selling it to voyages and translations, which he never could have read. When he had worn himself down in the service of the public, or the booksellers, there remained not, of all his slender remunerations, in the last stage of life, sufficient to convey him to a cheap country and a restorative air on the Continent. The father may have thought himself fortunate, that the daughter whom he loved with more than common affection was no more to share in his wants; but the husband had by his side the faithful companion of his life, left without a wreck of fortune. Smollett, gradually perishing in a foreign land, neglected by an admiring public, and without fresh resources from the booksellers, who were receiving the income of his works—threw out his injured feelings in the character of *Bramble*; the warm generosity of his temper, but not his genius, seemed fleeting with his breath. In a foreign land his widow marked by a plain monument the spot of his burial, and she perished in solitude! Yet Smollett dead—soon an ornamented column is raised at the place of his birth, while the grave of the author seemed to multiply the editions of his works. There are indeed grateful feelings in the public at large for a favourite author; but the awful testimony of those feelings, by its gradual progress, must appear beyond the grave! They visit the column consecrated by his name, and his features are most loved, most venerated, in the bust.

Smollett himself shall be the historian of his own heart; this most successful "Author by Profession," who, for his subsistence, composed master-works of genius, and drudged in the toils of slavery, shall himself tell us what happened, and describe that state between life and death, partaking of both, which obscured his faculties, and sickened his lofty spirit.

"Had some of those who were pleased to call themselves my friends been at any pains to deserve the character, and told me ingenuously what I had to expect in *the capacity of an author, when I first professed myself of that venerable fraternity*, I should in all probability have spared myself the *incredible labour and chagrin I have since undergone.*"

As a relief from literary labour, Smollett once went to revisit his family, and to embrace the mother he loved; but such was the irritation of his mind and the infirmity of his health, exhausted by the hard labours of authorship, that he never passed a more weary summer, nor ever found himself so incapable of indulging the warmest emotions of his heart. On his return, in a letter, he gave this melancholy narrative of himself:—"Between friends, I am now convinced that *my brain was in some measure affected*; for I had a kind of *Coma Vigil* upon me from April to November, without intermission. In consideration of this circumstance, I know you will forgive all my peevishness and discontent; tell Mrs. Moore that with regard to me, she has as yet seen nothing but the wrong side of the tapestry." Thus it happens in the life of authors, that they whose comic genius diffuses cheerfulness, create a pleasure which they cannot themselves participate.

The *Coma Vigil* may be described by a verse of Shakespeare:—

"Still-waking sleep! that is not what it is!"

Of praise and censure, says Smollett in a letter to Dr. Moore, "Indeed I am sick of both, and wish to God my circumstances would allow me to consign my pen to oblivion." A wish, as fervently repeated by many "Authors by Profession," who are not so fully entitled as was Smollett to write when he chose, or to have lived in quiet for what he had written. An author's life is therefore too often deprived of all social comfort, whether he be the writer for a minister, or a bookseller—but their case requires to be stated.

THE CASE OF AUTHORS STATED,

INCLUDING THE HISTORY OF LITERARY PROPERTY.

JOHNSON has dignified the booksellers as "the patrons of literature," which was generous in that great author, who had written well and lived but ill all his life on that patronage. Eminent booksellers, in their constant intercourse with the most

enlightened class of the community, that is, with the best authors and the best readers, partake of the intelligence around them; their great capitals, too, are productive of good and evil in literature; useful when they carry on great works, and pernicious when they sanction indifferent ones. Yet are they but commercial men. A trader can never be deemed a patron, for it would be romantic to purchase what is not saleable; and where no favour is conferred, there is no patronage.

Authors continue poor, and booksellers become opulent; an extraordinary result! Booksellers are not agents for authors, but proprietors of their works; so that the perpetual revenues of literature are solely in the possession of the trade.

Is it then wonderful that even successful authors are indigent? They are heirs to fortunes, but by a strange singularity they are disinherited at their birth; for, on the publication of their works, these cease to be their own property. Let that natural property be secured, and a good book would be an inheritance, a leasehold or a freehold, as you choose it; it might at least last out a generation, and descend to the author's blood, were they permitted to live on their father's glory, as in all other property they do on his industry *. Something of this nature has been instituted in France, where the descendants of Corneille and Molière retain a claim on the theatres whenever the dramas of their great ancestors are performed. In that country, literature has ever received peculiar honours—it was there decreed, in the affair of Crebillon, that literary productions are not seizable by creditors †.

The history of literary property in this country might form as ludicrous a narrative as Lucian's "true history." It was a long while doubtful whether any such thing existed, at the very time when booksellers were assigning over the perpetual copyrights of books, and making them the subject of family settlements for the provision of their wives and children! When Tonson in 1739 obtained an injunction to restrain another bookseller from printing Milton's Paradise Lost, he brought into court as a proof of his title an assignment of the original copyright, made over by the sublime poet in 1667, which was read. Milton received for this assignment the sum which we all know—Tonson and all his family and assignees rode in their carriages with the profits of the five-pound epic ‡.

The verbal and tasteless lawyers, not many years past, with legal metaphysics, wrangled like the schoolmen, inquiring of each other, "whether the *style* and *ideas* of an author were tangible things; or if these were a *property*, how is *possession* to be taken, or any act of *occupancy* made on mere intellectual *ideas*." Nothing, said they, can be an object of property, but which has a corporeal substance; the air and the light, to which they compared an author's ideas, are common to all; ideas in the MS. state were compared to birds in

* The following facts will show the value of *literary property*; immense profits and cheap purchases! The manuscript of "Robinson Crusoe" ran through the whole trade, and no one would print it; the bookseller who did purchase it, who it is said was not remarkable for his discernment, but for a speculative turn, got a thousand guineas by it. How many have the booksellers since accumulated? Burn's "Justice" was disposed of by its author for a trifle, as well as Buchan's "Domestic Medicine;" these works yield annual incomes. Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield" was sold in the hour of distress, with little distinction from any other work in that class of composition; and "Evelina" produced five guineas from the niggardly trader. Dr. Johnson fixed the price of his "Biography of the Poets" at two hundred guineas; and Mr. Malone observes, the booksellers in the course of twenty-five years have probably got five thousand. I could add a great number of facts of this nature which relate to living writers; the profits of their own works for two or three years would rescue them from the horrors and humiliation of pauperism. It is, perhaps, useful to record, that, while the compositions of genius are but slightly remunerated, though sometimes as productive as "the household stuff" of literature, the latter is rewarded with princely magnificence. At the sale of the Robinsons, the copy-right of "Vyse's Spelling-book" was sold at the enormous price of 2200*l.*, with an *annuity* of fifty guineas to the author!

† The circumstance, with the poet's dignified petition, and the King's honourable decree, are preserved in "Curiosities of Literature," p. 147, 11th edition, 1839.

‡ The elder Tonson's portrait represents him in his gown and cap, holding in his right hand a volume lettered "Paradise Lost"—such a favourite object was Milton and copyright! Jacob Tonson was the founder of a race who long honoured literature. His rise in life is curious. He was at first unable to pay twenty pounds for a play by Dryden, and joined with another bookseller to advance that sum; the play sold, and Tonson was afterwards enabled to purchase the succeeding ones. He and his nephew died worth two hundred thousand pounds.—Much old Tonson owed to his own industry; but he was a mere trader. He and Dryden had frequent bickerings; he insisted on receiving 10,000 verses for two hundred and sixty-eight pounds, and poor Dryden threw in the finest Ode in the language towards the number. He would pay in the base coin which was then current; which was a loss to the poet. Tonson once complained to Dryden, that he had only received 1446 lines of his translation of Ovid for his Miscellany for fifty guineas, when he had calculated at the rate of 1518 lines for forty guineas; he gives the poet a piece of critical reasoning, that he considered he had a better bargain with "Juvenal," which is reckoned "not so easy to translate as Ovid." In these times such a mere trader in literature has disappeared.

a cage; while the author confines them in his own dominion, none but he has a right to let them fly; but the moment he allows the bird to escape from his hand, it is no violation of property in any one to make it his own. And to prove that there existed no property after publication, they found an analogy in the gathering of acorns, or in seizing on a vacant piece of ground; and thus degrading that most refined piece of art formed in the highest state of society, a literary production, they brought us back to a state of nature; and seem to have concluded that literary property was purely ideal; a phantom which as its author could neither grasp nor confine to himself, he must entirely depend on the public benevolence for his reward.*

The Ideas, that is, the work of an author, are "tangible things." "There are works," to quote the words of a near and dear relative, "which require great learning, great industry, great labour, and great capital, in their preparation. They assume a palpable form. You may fill warehouses with them, and freight ships; and the tenure by which they are held is superior to that of all other property, for it is original. It is tenure which does not exist in a doubtful title; which does not spring from any adventitious circumstances;—it is not found—it is not purchased—it is not prescriptive—it is original; so it is the most natural of all titles, because it is the most simple and least artificial. It is paramount and sovereign, because it is a tenure by creation†."

There were indeed some more generous spirits and better philosophers fortunately found on the same bench; and the identity of a literary composition was resolved into its sentiments and language, besides what was more obviously valuable to some persons, the print and paper. On this slight principle was issued the profound award which accorded a certain term of years to any work, however immortal. They could not diminish the immortality of a book, but only its reward. In all the litigations respecting literary property, authors were little considered—except some honourable testimonies due to genius, from the sense of WILLES, and the eloquence of MANSFIELD. Literary property was still disputed, like the rights of a parish common. An honest printer, who could not always write grammar, had the shrewdness to make a bold effort in this scramble, and perceiving that even by this last favourable award all literary property would necessarily centre with the booksellers, now stood forward for his own body, the printers. This rough advocate observed, that "a few persons, who call themselves *booksellers*, about the number of *twenty-five*, have kept the *monopoly of books and copies* in their hands, to the entire exclusion of all others; but more especially the *printers*, whom they have always held it a rule never to let become purchasers in *copy*." Not a word for the *authors!* As for them, they were doomed by both parties as the fat oblation: they indeed sent forth some meek bleatings; but what were AUTHORS, between judges, booksellers, and printers? the sacrificed among the sacrificers!

All this was reasoning in a circle. LITERARY PROPERTY in our nation arose from a *new state of society*.—These lawyers could never develop its nature by wild analogies, nor discover it in any common-law right; for our common law, composed of immemorial customs, could never have had in its contemplation an object which could not have existed in barbarous periods. Literature, in its enlarged spirit, certainly never entered into the thoughts or attention of our rude ancestors. All their views were bounded by the necessaries of life; and as yet they had no conception of the impalpable, invisible, yet sovereign dominion of the human mind—enough for our rough heroes was that of the seas! Before the reign of Henry VIII. great authors composed occasionally a book in Latin, which none but other great authors cared for, and which the people could not read. In the reign of Elizabeth, ROGER ASCHAM appeared; one of those men of genius born to create a new era in the history of their nation. The first English author who may be regarded as the founder of our *prose style* was Roger Ascham, the venerable parent of our *native literature*. At a time when our scholars affected to contemn the vernacular idiom, and in their Latin works were losing their better fame, that of being understood by all their countrymen, Ascham boldly avowed the design of setting an example, in his own words, TO SPEAK AS THE COMMON PEOPLE, TO THINK AS WISE MEN. His pristine English is still forcible without pedantry, and still beautiful without ornament. The illustrious BACON condescended to follow this new example, in the most popular of his works. This change in our literature was like a revelation; these men taught us our language in books. We became a reading people; and then the demand for books naturally produced a new order of authors, who traded in literature. It was then, so early as in the Elizabethan age, that *literary property* may be said to derive its obscure origin in this nation. It was protected in an indirect manner by the *licensers* of the press; for although that was a mere political institution, only designed to prevent seditious and irreligious publications, yet, as no book could be printed without a licence, there was honour enough in the licensers not to allow other publishers to

* Sir James Burrows' Reports on the question concerning Literary Property, 4to. London, 1773.

† Mirror of Parliament, 3529.

infringe on the privilege granted to the first claimant.—In Queen Anne's time, when the office of licensers was extinguished, a more liberal genius was rising in the nation, and *literary property* received a more definite and a more powerful protection. A limited term was granted to every author to reap the fruits of his labours; and Lord Hardwicke pronounced this statute "a universal patent for authors." Yet subsequently, the subject of *literary property* involved discussion; even at so late a period as in 1769, it was still to be litigated. It was then granted that originally an author had at common law a property in his work, but that the act of Anne took away all copyright after the expiration of the terms it permitted.

As the matter now stands, let us address an arithmetical age—but my pen hesitates to bring down my subject to an argument fitted to "these coster-monger times.*" On the present principle of literary property, it results that an author disposes of a leasehold property of twenty-eight years, often for less than the price of one year's purchase! How many living authors are the sad witnesses of this fact, who, like so many Esaus, have sold their inheritance for a meal! I leave the whole school of Adam Smith to calm their calculating emotions concerning "that unprosperous race of men" (sometimes this master-seer calls them "unproductive") "commonly called *men of letters*" who are pretty much in the situation which lawyers and physicians would be in, were these, as he tells us, in that state when "*a scholar* and *a beggar* seem to have been very nearly *synonymous terms*"—and this melancholy fact that man of genius discovered, without the feather of his pen brushing away a tear from his lid—without one spontaneous and indignant groan!

Authors may exclaim, "we ask for justice, not charity." They would not need to require any favour, nor claim any other than that protection which an enlightened government, in its wisdom and its justice, must bestow. They would leave to the public disposition the sole appreciation of their works; their book must make its own fortune; a bad work may be cried up, and a good work may be cried down; but Faction will soon lose its voice, and Truth acquire one. The cause we are pleading is not the calamities of indifferent writers; but of those whose utility, or whose genius, long survives that limited term which has been so hardly wrenched from the penurious hand of verbal lawyers. Every lover of literature, and every votary of humanity, has long felt indignant at that sordid state and all those secret sorrows to which men of the finest genius, or of sublime industry, are reduced and degraded in society. Johnson himself, who rejected that perpetuity of literary property, which some enthusiasts seemed to claim at the time the subject was undergoing the discussion of the judges, is however for extending the copyright to a *century*. Could authors secure this their natural right, literature would acquire a permanent and a nobler reward; for great authors would then be distinguished by the very profits they would receive, from that obscure multitude, whose common disgraces they frequently participate, notwithstanding the superiority of their own genius. Johnson himself will serve as a proof of the incompetent remuneration of literary property. He undertook and he performed an Herculean labour, which employed him so many years that the price he obtained was exhausted before the work was concluded:—the wages did not even last as long as the labour! Where then is the author to look forward, when such works are undertaken, for a provision for his family, or for his future existence? It would naturally arise from the work itself, were authors not the most ill-treated and oppressed class of the community. The daughter of MILTON need not have craved the alms of the admirers of her father, if the right of authors had been better protected; his own Paradise Lost had then been her better portion, and her most honourable inheritance. The children of BURNS would have required no subscriptions; that annual tribute which the public pay to the genius of their parent was their due, and would have been their fortune.

Authors now submit to have a shorter life than their own celebrity. While the book markets of Europe are supplied with the writings of English authors, and they have a wider diffusion in America than at home, it seems a national ingratitude to limit the existence of works for their authors to a short number of years, and then to seize on their possession for ever.

* A Coster-monger, or Costard-monger, is a dealer in apples, which are so called because they are shaped like a *costard*, *i. e.* a man's head. *Steevens.*—Johnson explains the phrase eloquently: "In these times when the prevalence of trade has produced that meanness, that rates the merit of everything by money."

THE SUFFERINGS OF AUTHORS.

THE *natural rights and properties of* AUTHORS not having been sufficiently protected, they are defrauded, not indeed of their fame, though they may not always live to witness it, but of their *uninterrupted profits*, which might save them from their frequent degradation in society. That act of Anne which confers on them some right of property, acknowledges that works of learned men have been carried on "too often to the ruin of them and their families."

Hence we trace a literary calamity which the public endure in those "Authors by Profession," who, finding often too late in life that it is the worst profession, are not scrupulous to live by some means or other. "I must live," cried one of the brotherhood, shrugging his shoulders in his misery, and almost blushing for a libel he had just printed—"I do not see the necessity," was the dignified reply. Trade was certainly not the origin of authorship. Most of our great authors have written from a more impetuous impulse than that of a mechanic; urged by a loftier motive than that of humouring the popular taste, they have not lowered themselves by writing down to the public, but have raised the public to them. Untasked, they composed at propitious intervals; and feeling, not labour, was in their last, as in their first page.

When we became a reading people, books were to be suited to popular tastes, and then that trade was opened that leads to the workhouse. A new race sprang up, that, like Ascham, "spoke as the common people;" but would not, like Ascham, "think as wise men." The founders of "Authors by Profession" appear as far back as in the Elizabethan age. Then there were some roguish wits, who taking advantage of the public humour, and yielding their principle to their pen, lived to write, and wrote to live; loose livers and loose writers!—like Autolycus, they ran to the fair, with baskets of hasty manufactures, fit for clowns and maidens.*

Even then flourished the craft of authorship, and the mysteries of book-selling. Robert Greene, the master-wit, wrote "The Art of Coney-catching," or Cheatery, in which he was an adept; he died of a surfeit of rhenish and pickled herrings, at a fatal banquet of authors;—and left as his legacy among the 'Authors by Profession' "A groatsworth of wit, bought with a million of repentance." One died of another kind of surfeit. Another was assassinated in a brothel. But the list of the calamities of all these worthies have as great variety as those of the Seven Champions. Nor were the *stationers*, or *book-venders*, as the publishers of books were first designated, at a fault in the mysteries of "coney-catching." Deceptive and vaunting title-pages were practised to such excess, that Tom Nash, an "Author by Profession," never fastidiously modest, blushed at the title of his "Pierce Pennilesse," which the publisher had flourished in the first edition, like "a tedious mountebank." The booksellers forged great names to recommend their works, and passed off in currency their base metal stamped with a royal head. "It was an usual thing in those days," says honest Anthony Wood, "to set a great name to a book or books, by the sharking booksellers or snivelling writers, to get bread."

Such authors as these are unfortunate, before they are criminal; they often tire out their youth before they discover that "Author by Profession" is a denomination ridiculously assumed, for it is none! The first efforts of men of genius are usually honourable ones; but too often they suffer that genius to be debased. Many who would have composed history have turned voluminous party-writers; many a noble satirist has become a hungry libeller. Men who are starved in society, hold to it but loosely. They are the children of Nemesis! they avenge themselves—and with the Satan of Milton they exclaim,

"Evil, be thou my good!"

Never were their feelings more vehemently echoed than by this Nash—the creature of genius, of famine, and despair. He lived indeed in the age of Elizabeth, but writes as if he had lived in our own. He proclaimed himself to the world as *Pierce Pennilesse*, and on a retrospect of his *literary life*, observes that he had "sat up late and rose early, contended with the cold, and conversed with scarcitie;" he says, "all my labours turned to losse,—I was despised and neglected, my paines not regarded, or slightly rewarded, and I myself, in prime of my best wit, laid open to povertie. Whereupon I accused my fortune, railed on my patrons, bit my pen, rent my papers, and raged."—And then comes the after-reflection, which so frequently provokes the anger of genius: "How many base men that wanted those parts I had, enjoyed content at will, and had wealth at command! I called to mind a cobbler that was worth five hundred pounds; an hostler that had built a goodly inn; a carman in a leather pilche that had whipt a thousand pound out of his horses tail—and have I more than these? thought I to myself; am I better born? am I better brought up? yea, and better favoured! and yet am I a beggar? How am I crost, or whence is this curse? Even from hence, the men that should employ such as I am, are enamoured of their own wits, though they be never so scurvie; that a scrivener is better paid than a scholar; and men of art must seek to live among cormorants, or be kept under by dunces, who count it policy to keep them bare to follow their books the better." And then, Nash thus utters the cries of—

* An abundance of these amusing tracts eagerly bought up in their day, but which came in the following generation to the ballad-stalls, are in the present enshrined in the cabinets of the curious. Such are the revolutions of literature!

A DESPAIRING AUTHOR!

"Why is't damnation to despair and die
When life is my true happiness' disease?
My soul! my soul! thy safety makes me fly
The faulty means that might my pain appease;
Divines and dying men may talk of hell;
But in my heart her several torments dwell.

Ah worthless wit, to train me to this woe!
Deceitful arts that nourish discontent!
Ill thrive the folly that bewitch'd me so!
Vain thoughts, adieu! for now I will repent;
And yet my wants persuade me to proceed,
Since none take pity of a scholar's need!—

Forgive me, God, although I curse my birth,
And ban the air wherein I breathe a wretch!
For misery hath daunted all my mirth—
Without redress complains my careless verse,
And Midas' ears relent not at my moan!
In some far land will I my griefs rehearse,
'Mongst them that will be moved when I shall groan!
England, adieu! the soil that brought me forth!
Adieu, unkinde! where skill is nothing worth!"

Such was the miserable cry of an "Author by Profession" in the reign of Elizabeth. Nash not only renounces his country in his despair—and hesitates on "the faulty means" which have appeased the pangs of many of his unhappy brothers, but he proves also the weakness of the moral principle among these men of genius; for he promises, if any Mæcenas will bind him by his bounty, he will do him "as much honour as any poet of my beardless years in England—but," he adds, "if he be sent away with a flea in his ear, let him look that I will rail on him soundly; not for an hour or a day, while the injury is fresh in my memory, but in some elaborate polished poem, which I will leave to the world when I am dead, to be a living image to times to come of his beggarly parsimony." Poets might imagine that CHATTERTON had written all this, about the time he struck a balance of his profit and loss by the death of Beckford the Lord Mayor, in which he concludes with "am glad he is dead by 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*"*

* Chatterton had written a political essay for "The North Briton," which opened with the preluding flourish of "A spirited people freeing themselves from insupportable slavery:" it was however, though accepted, not printed, on account of the Lord Mayor's death. The patriot thus calculated the death of his great patron!

			£	s.	d.
Lost by his death in this Essay				1	11 6
Gained in Elegies	£2	2			
—— in Essays	3	3			
			5	5	0
Am glad he is dead by			£3	13	6

A MENDICANT AUTHOR,

AND THE PATRONS OF FORMER TIMES.

It must be confessed, that before "Authors by Profession" had fallen into the hands of the booksellers, they endured peculiar grievances. They were pitiable retainers of some great family. The miseries of such an author, and the insolence and penuriousness of his patrons, who would not return the poetry they liked and would not pay for, may be traced in the eventful life of THOMAS CHURCHYARD, a poet of the age of Elizabeth, one of those unfortunate men who have written poetry all their days, and lived a long life, to complete the misfortune. His muse was so fertile, that his works pass all enumeration. He courted numerous patrons, who valued the poetry, while they left the poet to his own miserable contemplations. In a long catalogue of his works, which this poet has himself given, he adds a few memoranda, as he proceeds, a little ludicrous, but very melancholy. He wrote a book which he could never afterwards recover from one of his patrons, and adds, "all which book was in as good verse as ever I made; an honourable knight dwelling in the Black Friers can witness the same, because I read it unto him." Another accorded him the same remuneration—on which he adds, "An infinite number of other songs and sonnets given where they cannot be recovered, nor purchase any favour when they are craved." Still, however, he announces "twelve long tales for Christmas, dedicated to twelve honourable Lords." Well might Churchyard write his own sad life, under the title of "The tragicall Discourse of the haplesse Man's Life."

It will not be easy to parallel this pathetic description of the wretched age of a poor neglected poet mourning over a youth vainly spent.

"High time it is to haste my carcase hence:
Youth stole away and felt no kind of joy,
And age he left in travail ever since;
The wanton days that made me nice and coy
Were but a dream, a shadow, and a toy—

I look in glass, and find my cheeks so lean
That every hour I do but wish me dead;
Now back bends down, and forwards falls the head,
And hollow eyes in wrinkled brow doth shroud
As though two stars were creeping under cloud.

The lips wax cold and look both pale and thin,
The teeth falls out as nutts forsook the shell,
The bare bald head but shows where hair hath been,
The lively joints wax weary, stiff, and still,
The ready tongue now falters in his tale;
The courage quails as strength decays and goes....

The thatcher hath a cottage poor you see:
The shepherd knows where he shall sleep at night;
The daily drudge from cares can quiet be:
Thus fortune sends some rest to every wight;
And I was born to house and land by right. ..

Well, ere my breath my body do forsake
My spirit I bequeath to God above;
My books, my scrawls, and songs that I did make,
I leave with friends, that freely did me love....

Now, friends, shake hands, I must be gone, my boys!
Our mirth takes end, our triumph all is done;
Our tickling talk, our sports and merry toys
Do glide away like shadow of the sun.
Another comes when I my race have run,
Shall pass the time with you in better plight,
And find good cause of greater things to write."

Yet Churchyard was no contemptible bard; he composed a national poem, "The Worthiness of Wales," which has been reprinted, and will be still dear to his "Father-land," as the Hollanders expressively denote their natal spot. He wrote, in "The Mirrour of Magistrates," the life of Wolsey, which has parts of great dignity; and the life of Jane Shore, which was much noticed in his day, for a severe critic of the times writes:

"Hath not Shore's wife, although a light-skirt she,
Given him a chaste, long, lasting memorie?"

Churchyard and the miseries of his poetical life are alluded to by Spenser. He is old Palemon in "Colin Clout's come home again." Spenser is supposed to describe this laborious writer for half a century, whose melancholy pipe, in his old age, may make the reader "rew:"

"Yet he himself may rewed be more right,
That sung so long untill quite hoarse he grew."

His epitaph, preserved by Camden, is extremely instructive to all poets, could epitaphs instruct them:—

"*Poverty* and *poetry* his tomb doth inclose;
Wherefore, good neighbours, be merry in *prose*."

It appears also by a confession of Tom Nash, that an author would then, pressed by the *res angusta domi*, when "the bottom of his purse was turned upward," submit to compose pieces for gentlemen who aspired to authorship. He tells us on some occasion, that he was then in the country composing poetry for some country squire; —and says, "I am faine to let my plow stand still in the midst of a furrow, to follow these Senior Fantasticos, to whose amorous *villanellas** I prostitute my pen," and this, too, "twice or thrice in a month;" and he complains that it is "poverty which alone maketh me so unconstant to my determined studies, trudging from place to place to and fro, and prosecuting the means to keep me from idlenesse." An author was then much like a vagrant.

Even at a later period, in the reign of the literary James, great authors were reduced to a state of mendicity, and lived on alms, although their lives and their fortunes had been consumed in forming national labours. The antiquary Stowe exhibits a striking example of the rewards conferred on such valued authors. Stowe had devoted his life, and exhausted his patrimony, in the study of English antiquities; he had travelled on foot throughout the kingdom, inspecting all monuments of antiquity, and rescuing what he could from the dispersed libraries of the monasteries. His stupendous collections, in his own hand-writing, still exist, to provoke the feeble industry of literary loiterers. He felt through life the enthusiasm of study; and seated in his monkish library, living with the dead more than with the living, he was still a student of taste: for Spenser the poet visited the library of Stowe; and the first good edition of Chaucer was made so chiefly by the labours of our author. Late in life, worn out with study and the cares of poverty, neglected by that proud metropolis of which he had been the historian, his good-humour did not desert him; for being afflicted with sharp pains in his aged feet, he observed that "his affliction lay in that part which formerly he had made so much use of." Many a mile had he wandered and much had he expended, for those treasures of antiquities which had exhausted his fortune, and with which he had formed works of great public utility. It was in his eightieth year that Stowe at length received a public acknowledgment of his services, which will appear to us of a very extraordinary nature. He was so reduced in his circumstances that he petitioned James I. for a *licence to collect alms* for himself! "as a recompense for his labour and travel of *forty-five years*, in setting forth the *Chronicles of England*, and *eight years* taken up in the *Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster*, towards his relief now in his old age; having left his former means of living, and only employing himself for the service and good of his country." Letters patent under the great seal were granted. After no penurious commendation of Stowe's labours, he is permitted "to gather the benevolence of well-disposed people within this realm of England: to ask, gather, and take the alms of all our loving subjects." These letters-patent were to be published by the clergy from their pulpit; they produced so little that they were renewed for another twelvemonth: one entire parish in the city contributed seven shillings and sixpence! Such then was the patronage received by Stowe, to be a licensed beggar throughout the kingdom for one twelvemonth! Such was the public remuneration of a man who had been useful to his nation, but not to himself!

Such was the first age of *Patronage*, which branched out in the last century into an age of

* *Villanellas*, or rather "*Villanescas*, are properly country rustic songs, but commonly taken for ingenious ones made in imitation of them."—Pineda.

Subscriptions, when an author levied contributions before his work appeared; a mode which inundated our literature with a great portion of its worthless volumes: of these the most remarkable are the splendid publications of Richard Blome; they may be called fictitious works; for they are only mutilated transcripts from Camden and Speed, but richly ornamented, and pompously printed, which this literary adventurer, said to have been a gentleman, loaded the world with, by the aid of his subscribers. Another age was that of *Dedications* *, when the author was to lift his tiny patron to the skies, in an inverse ratio as he lowered himself, in this public exhibition. Sometimes the party haggled about the price†; or the statue, while stepping into his niche, would turn round on the author to assist his invention. A patron of Peter Motteux, dissatisfied with Peter's colder temperament, composed the superlative dedication to himself, and completed the misery of the author by subscribing it with Motteux's name‡! Worse fared it when authors were the unlucky hawkers of their own works; of which I shall give a remarkable instance in Myles Davies, a learned man maddened by want and indignation.

The subject before us exhibits one of the most singular spectacles in these volumes; that of a scholar of extensive erudition, whose life seems to have passed in the study of languages and the sciences, while his faculties appear to have been disordered from the simplicity of his nature, and driven to madness by indigence and insult. He formed the wild resolution of becoming a mendicant author, the hawker of his own works; and by this mode endured all the aggravated sufferings, the great and the petty insults of all ranks of society, and even sometimes from men of learning themselves, who denied a mendicant author the sympathy of a brother.

Myles Davies and his works are imperfectly known to the most curious of our literary collectors. His name has scarcely reached a few; the author and his works are equally extraordinary, and claim a right to be preserved in this treatise on the Calamities of Authors.

Our author commenced printing a work, difficult, from its miscellaneous character, to describe; of which the volumes appeared at different periods. The early and the most valuable volumes were the first and second; they are a kind of bibliographical, biographical, and critical work, on English Authors. They all bear a general title of "Athenæ Britannicæ §."

Collectors have sometimes met with a very curious volume, entitled "Icon Libellorum," and sometimes the same book, under another title,—

* This practice of dedications had indeed flourished before; for authors had even prefixed numerous dedications to the same work, or dedicated to different patrons, the separate divisions. Fuller's "Church History" is disgraced by the introduction of twelve title-pages, besides the general one; with as many particular dedications, and no less than fifty or sixty inscriptions, addressed to benefactors; for which he is severely censured by Heylin. It was an expedient to procure dedication fees; for publishing books by *subscription* was an art not then discovered.

† The price of the dedication of a play was even fixed, from five to ten guineas, from the Revolution to the time of George I.; when it rose to twenty—but sometimes a bargain was to be struck—when the author and the play were alike indifferent. Even on these terms could vanity be gratified with the coarse luxury of panegyric, of which every one knew the price.

‡ This circumstance was so notorious at the time, that it occasioned a poetical satire in a dialogue between Motteux and his patron Henningham—preserved in that vast flower-bed or dunghill, for it is both, of "Poems on Affairs of State," vol. ii. 251. The patron, in his zeal to omit no possible distinction that could attach to him, had given one circumstance which no one but himself could have known, and which he thus regrets:

"PATRON.
I must confess I was to blame
That one particular to name;
The rest could never have been known,
I made the style so like thy own.

POET.
I beg your pardon, Sir, for that!

PATRON.
Why d——e what would you be at?
I writ below myself, you sot!
Avoiding figures, tropes, what not;
For fear I should my fancy *raise*
Above the level of thy plays!"

§ "*Athenæ Britannicæ*, or a Critical History of the Oxford and Cambridge Writers and Writings, with those of the Dissenters and Romanists as well as other Authors and Worthies, both Domestic and Foreign, both Ancient and Modern. Together with an occasional freedom of thought, in criticising and comparing the parallel qualifications of the most eminent authors and their performances, both in MS. and print, both at home and abroad. By M. D. London, 1716." On the first volume of this series Dr. Farmer, a bloodhound of unfailing scent in curious and obscure English books, has written on the leaf "This is the only copy I have met with." Even the great bibliographer, Baker, of Cambridge, never met but with three volumes (the edition at the British Museum is in seven) sent him as a great curiosity by the Earl of Oxford, and now deposited in his collection at St. John's College. Baker has written this memorandum in the first volume: "Few copies were printed, so the work is become scarce, and for that reason will be valued. The book in the greatest part is borrowed from modern historians, but yet contains some things more uncommon, and not easily to be met with." How superlatively rare must be the English volumes which the eyes of Farmer and Baker never lighted on!

"A Critical History of Pamphlets." This rare book forms the first volume of the "Athenæ Britannicæ." The author was Myles Davies, whose biography is quite unknown: he may now be his own biographer. He was a Welsh clergyman, a vehement foe to Popery, Arianism, and Socinianism, of the most fervent loyalty to George I. and the Hanoverian succession; a scholar, skilled in Greek and Latin, and in all the modern languages. Quitting his native spot with political disgust, he changed his character in the metropolis, for he subscribes himself "Counsellor-at-Law." In an evil hour he commenced author, not only surrounded by his books, but with the more urgent companions of a wife and family; and with that childlike simplicity which sometimes marks the mind of a retired scholar, we perceive him imagining that his immense reading would prove a source, not easily exhausted, for their subsistence.

From the first volumes of his series much curious literary history may be extracted, amidst the loose and wandering elements of this literary chaos. In his dedication to the Prince he professes "to represent writers and writings in a catoptrick view."

The preface to the second volume opens his plan; and nothing as yet indicates those rambling humours which his subsequent labours exhibit.

As he proceeded in forming these volumes, I suspect, either that his mind became a little disordered, or that he discovered that mere literature found but penurious patrons in "the Few;" for, attempting to gain over all classes of society, he varied his investigations, and courted attention, by writing on law, physic, divinity, as well as literary topics. By his account—

"The avarice of booksellers, and the stinginess of hard-hearted patrons, had driven him into a cursed company of door-keeping herds, to meet the irrational brutality of those uneducated mischievous animals called footmen, house-porters, poetasters, mumpers, apothecaries, attorneys, and suchlike beasts of prey," who were, like himself, sometimes barred up for hours in the menagerie of a great man's antechamber. In his addresses to Drs. Mead and Freind, he declares—"My misfortunes drive me to publish my writings for a poor livelihood; and nothing but the utmost necessity could make any man in his senses to endeavour at it, in a method so burthensome to the modesty and education of a scholar."

In French he dedicates to George I.; and in the Harleian MSS. I discovered a long letter to the Earl of Oxford, by our author, in French, with a Latin ode. Never was more innocent bribery proffered to a minister! He composed what he calls *Strictura Pindarica* on the "Mughouses," then political clubs; celebrates English authors in the same odes, and inserts a political Latin drama, called "Pallas Anglicana." Mævius and Bavius were never more indefatigable! The author's intellect gradually discovers its confusion amidst the loud cries of penury and despair.

To paint the distresses of an author soliciting alms for a book which he presents—and which, whatever may be its value, comes at least as an evidence that the suppliant is a learned man, is a case so uncommon, that the invention of the novelist seems necessary to fill up the picture. But Myles Davies is an artist, in his own simple narrative.

Our author has given the names of several of his unwilling customers:—

"Those squeeze-farthing and hoard-penny ignoramus doctors, with several great personages who formed excuses for not accepting my books; or they would receive them, but give nothing for them; or else deny they had them, or remembered anything of them; and so gave me nothing for my last present of books, though they kept them *gratis et ingratiis*.

"But his grace of the Dutch extraction in Holland (said to be akin to Mynheer Vander B—nck) had a peculiar grace in receiving my present of books and odes, which, being bundled up together with a letter and ode upon his graceship, and carried in by his porter, I was bid to call for an answer five years hence. I asked the porter what he meant by that? I suppose, said he, four or five days hence—but it proved five or six months after, before I could get any answer, though I had writ five or six letters in French with fresh odes upon his graceship, and an account where I lived, and what noblemen had accepted of my present. I attended about the door three or four times a week all that time constantly from twelve to four or five o'clock in the evening; and walking under the fore windows of the parlours, once that time his and her grace came after dinner to stare at me, with open windows and shut mouths, but filled with fair water, which they spouted with so much dexterity that they twisted the water through their teeth and mouth-skrew, to flash near my face, and yet just to miss me, though my nose could not well miss the natural flavour of the orange-water showering so very near me. Her grace began the water-work, but not very gracefully, especially for an English lady of her description, airs, and qualities, to make a stranger her spitting-post, who had been guilty of no other offence than to offer her husband some writings.—His grace followed, yet first stood looking so wistfully towards me, that I verily thought he had a mind to throw me a guinea or two for all these indignities, and two or three months' then sleeveless waiting upon him—and

accordingly I advanced to address his grace to remember the poor author, but, instead of an answer, he immediately undams his mouth, out fly whole showers of lymphatic rockets, which had like to have put out my mortal eyes."

Still he was not disheartened, and still applied for his bundle of books, which were returned to him at length unopened, with "half a guinea upon top of the cargo," and "with a desire to receive no more. I plucked up courage, murmuring within myself—

'Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.'"

He sarcastically observes,

"As I was still jogging on homewards, I thought that a great many were called *their Graces*, not for any grace or favour they had truly deserved with God or man, but for the same reason of contraries, that the *Parcæ* or Destinies, were so called, because they spared none, or were not truly the *Parcæ, quia non parcebant.*"

Our indigent and indignant author, by the faithfulness of his representations, mingles with his anger some ludicrous scenes of literary mendicity.

"I can't choose (now I am upon the fatal subject) but make one observation or two more upon the various rencontres and adventures I met withall, in presenting my books to those who were likely to accept of them for their own information, or for that of helping a poor scholar, or for their own vanity or ostentation.

"Some parsons would hollow to raise the whole house and posse of the domestics to raise a poor *crown*; at last all that flutter ends in sending Jack or Tom out to change a guinea, and then 'tis reckoned over half-a-dozen times before the fatal crown can be picked out, which must be taken as it is given, with all the parade of almsgiving, and so to be received with all the active and passive ceremonial of mendication and alms-receiving—as if the books, printing and paper, were worth nothing at all, and as if it were the greatest charity for them to touch them or let them be in the house; 'For I shall never read them,' says one of the five-shilling-piece-chaps—'I have no time to look in them,' says another;—'Tis so much money lost,' says a grave dean;—'My eyes being so bad,' said a bishop, 'that I can scarce read at all.'—'What do you want with me?" said another; 'Sir, I presented you the other day with my *Athenæ Britannicæ*, being the last part published.'—'I don't want books, take them again; I don't understand what they mean.' 'The title is very plain,' said I, 'and they are writ mostly in English.' 'I'll give you a crown for both the volumes.' 'They stand me, sir, in more than that, and 'tis for a bare subsistence I present or sell them; how shall I live?' 'I care not a farthing for that, live or die, 'tis all one to me.'—'Damn my master!' said Jack, 'twas but last night he was commending your books and your learning to the skies; and now he would not care if you were starving before his eyes; nay, he often makes game at your clothes, though he thinks you the greatest scholar in England.'"

Such was the life of a learned mendicant author! The scenes which are here exhibited appear to have disordered an intellect which had never been firm; in vain our author attempted to adapt his talents to all orders of men, still "To the crazy ship, all winds are contrary."

COWLEY.

OF HIS MELANCHOLY.

THE mind of COWLEY was beautiful, but a querulous tenderness in his nature breathes not only through his works, but influenced his habits and his views of human affairs. His temper and his genius would have opened to us, had not the strange decision of Sprat and Clifford withdrawn that full correspondence of his heart which he had carried on many years. These letters were suppressed because, as Bishop Sprat acknowledges, "in this kind of prose Mr. Cowley was excellent! They had a domestical plainness, and a peculiar kind of familiarity." And then the florid writer runs off, that, "in letters, where the souls of men should appear undressed, in that negligent habit they may be fit to be seen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad into the streets." A false criticism: which not only has proved to be so since their time by Mason's "Memoirs of Gray," but which these friends of Cowley might have themselves perceived, if they had recollected that the Letters of Cicero to Atticus form the most delightful chronicles of the heart—and the most authentic memorials of the man. Peck obtained one letter of Cowley's, preserved by Johnson, and it exhibits a remarkable picture of the miseries of his poetical solitude. It is, perhaps, not too late to inquire, whether this correspondence was destroyed as well as suppressed? Would Sprat and Clifford have burned what they have told us they so much admired*?

* My researches could never obtain more than one letter of Cowley's—it is but an elegant trifle—returning thanks to his friend Evelyn, for some seeds and plants. "The Garden" of Evelyn is immortalised in a delightful Ode of Cowley's, as well as by Evelyn himself. Even in this small note, we may discover the touch of Cowley. The original is in Astle's collection.

MR. ABRAHAM COWLEY TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQ.

"SIR, *Barn Elms, March* 23, 1663.

"There is nothing more pleasant than to see kindness in a person, for whom we have great esteem and respect:

Fortunately for our literary sympathy, the fatal error of these fastidious critics has been in some degree repaired by the admirable genius himself whom they have injured. When Cowley retreated from society, he determined to draw up an apology for his conduct, and to have dedicated it to his patron, Lord St. Albans. His death interrupted the entire design; but his Essays, which Pope so finely calls "the language of his heart," are evidently parts of these precious Confessions. All of Cowley's tenderest and undisguised feelings have therefore not perished. These Essays now form a species of composition in our language, a mixture of prose and verse—the man with the poet—the self-painter has sat to himself, and, with the utmost simplicity, has copied out the image of his soul.

Why has this poet twice called himself *the melancholy Cowley?* He employed no poetical *cheville** for the metre of a verse which his own feelings inspired.

Cowley, at the beginning of the civil war, joined the royalists at Oxford; followed the queen to Paris; yielded his days and his nights to an employment of the highest confidence, that of deciphering the royal correspondence; he transacted their business, and, almost divorcing himself from his neglected muse, he yielded up for them the tranquillity so necessary to the existence of a poet. From his earliest days he tells us how the poetic affections had stamped themselves on his heart, "like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, will grow proportionably."

He describes his feelings at the court:—

"I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life the nearer I came to it—that beauty which I did not fall in love with when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw it was adulterate. I met with several great persons whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired. I was in a crowd of good company, in business of great and honourable trust; I eat at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences that ought to be desired by a man of my condition; yet I could not abstain from renewing my old school-boy's wish, in a copy of verses to the same effect:—

"Well then! I now do plainly see,
This busie world and I shall ne'er agree!"

After several years' absence from his native country, at a most critical period, he was sent over to mix with that trusty band of loyalists, who, in secrecy and in silence, were devoting themselves to the royal cause. Cowley was seized on by the ruling powers. At this moment he published a preface to his works, which some of his party interpreted as a relaxation of his loyalty. He has been fully defended. Cowley, with all his delicacy of temper, wished sincerely to retire from all parties; and saw enough among the fiery zealots of his own, to grow disgusted even with royalists.

His wish for retirement has been half censured as cowardice, by Johnson; but there was a tenderness of feeling which had ill formed Cowley for the cunning of party intriguers, and the company of little villains. About this time he might have truly distinguished himself as "The melancholy Cowley."

I am only tracing his literary history for the purpose of this work: but I cannot pass without noticing the fact, that this abused man, whom his enemies were calumniating, was at this moment, under the disguise of a doctor of physic, occupied by the novel studies of botany and medicine; and as all science in the mind of the poet naturally becomes poetry, he composed his books on plants in Latin verse.

At length came the Restoration, which the

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no, not the sight of your garden in May, or even the having such an one; which makes me more obliged to return you my most humble thanks for the testimonies I have lately received of you, both by your letter and your presents. I have already sowed such of your seeds as I thought most proper, upon a hot-bed; but cannot find in all my books a catalogue of these plants which require that culture, nor of such as must be set in pots; which defects, and all others, I hope shortly to see supplied, as I hope shortly to see your work of Horticulture finished and published; and long to be in all things your disciple, as I am in all things now,

Sir, Your most humble,
and most obedient Servant,
A. COWLEY."

Such were the ordinary letters which passed between two men whom it would be difficult to parallel, for their elegant tastes and gentle dispositions. Evelyn's beautiful retreat at Sayes Court at Deptford is described by a contemporary as "a garden exquisite and most boscaresque, and, as it were, an exemplar of his book of Forest-trees." It was the entertainment and wonder of the greatest men of those times, and inspired the following lines of Cowley, to Evelyn and his Lady, who excelled in the arts her husband loved; for she designed the frontispiece to his version of Lucretius—

"In books and gardens thou hast placed aright
(Things well which thou dost understand,
And both dost make with thy laborious hand)
Thy noble innocent delight;
And in thy virtuous wife, where thou again dost meet
Both pleasures more refined and sweet;
The fairest garden in her looks,
And in her mind the wisest books."

* A term the French apply to those *botches* which bad poets use to make out their metre.

poet zealously celebrated in his "Ode" on that occasion. Both Charles the First and Second had promised to reward his fidelity with the mastership of the Savoy; but, Wood says, "he lost it by certain persons enemies of the muses." Wood has said no more; and none of Cowley's biographers have thrown any light on the circumstance: perhaps we may discover this literary calamity.

That Cowley caught no warmth from that promised sunshine which the new monarch was to scatter in prodigal gaiety, has been distinctly told by the poet himself; his muse, in "The Complaint," having reproached him thus:—

"Thou young prodigal, who didst so loosely waste
Of all thy youthful years, the good estate—
Thou changeling then, bewitch'd with noise and show,
Wouldst into courts and cities from me go—
Go, renegado, cast up thy account—
Behold the public storm is spent at last;
The sovereign is toss'd at sea no more,
And thou, with all the noble company,
Art got at last to shore—
But whilst thy fellow-voyagers I see,
All march'd up to possess the promised land;
Thou still alone (alas!) dost gaping stand
Upon the naked beach, upon the barren sand."

But neglect was not all Cowley had to endure; the royal party seemed disposed to calumniate him. When Cowley was young he had hastily composed the comedy of "The Guardian;" a piece which served the cause of loyalty. After the Restoration, he rewrote it under the title of "Cutter of Coleman Street;" a comedy which may still be read with equal curiosity and interest: a spirited picture of the peculiar characters which appeared at the Revolution. It was not only ill received by a faction, but by those vermin of a new court, who, without merit themselves, put in their claims, by crying down those who, with great merit, are not in favour. All these to a man accused the author of having written a satire against the king's party. And this wretched party prevailed, too long for the author's repose, but not for his fame. Many years afterwards this comedy became popular. Dryden, who was present at the representation, tells us, that Cowley "received the news of his ill success not with so much firmness as might have been expected from so great a man." Cowley was in truth a great man, and a greatly injured man. His sensibility and delicacy of temper were of another texture than Dryden's. What at that moment did Cowley experience, when he beheld himself neglected, calumniated, and, in his last appeal to public favour, found himself still a victim to a vile faction; who, to court their common master, were trampling on their honest brother?

We shall find an unbroken chain of evidence, clearly demonstrating the agony of his literary feelings. The cynical Wood tells us, that, "not finding that preferment he expected, while others for their money carried away most places, he retired discontented into Surrey." And his panegyrist, Sprat, describes him as "weary of the vexations and formalities of an active condition—he had been perplexed with a long compliance with foreign manners. He was satiated with the arts of a court, which sort of life, though his virtue made it innocent to him, yet nothing could make it quiet. These were the reasons that moved him to follow the violent inclination of his own mind," &c. I doubt if either the sarcastic antiquary or the rhetorical panegyrist have developed the simple truth of Cowley's "violent inclination of his own mind." He does it himself more openly in that beautiful picture of an injured poet, in "The Complaint," an ode warm with individual feeling, but which Johnson coldly passes over, by telling us that "it met the usual fortune of complaints, and seems to have excited more contempt than pity."

Thus the biographers of Cowley have told us nothing, and the poet himself has probably not told us all. To these calumnies respecting Cowley's comedy, raised up by those whom Wood designates as "enemies of the muses," it would appear that others were added of a deeper dye, and in malignant whispers distilled into the ear of royalty. Cowley, in an ode, had commemorated the genius of Brutus, with all the enthusiasm of a votary of liberty. After the king's return, when Cowley solicited some reward for his sufferings and services in the royal cause, the chancellor is said to have turned on him with a severe countenance, saying, "Mr. Cowley, your pardon is your reward!" It seems that ode was then considered to be of a dangerous tendency among half the nation; Brutus would be the model of enthusiasts, who were sullenly bending their neck under the yoke of royalty. Charles II. feared the attempt of desperate men; and he might have forgiven Rochester a loose pasquinade, but not Cowley a solemn invocation. This fact then is said to have been the true cause of the despondence so prevalent in the latter poetry of "the melancholy Cowley." And hence the indiscretion of the muse, in a single flight, condemned her to a painful, rather than a voluntary solitude; and made the poet complain of "barren praise" and "neglected verse*."

While this anecdote harmonises with better

* The anecdote, probably little known, may be found in "The judgment of Dr. Prideaux in condemning the murder of Julius Cæsar by the conspirators as a most villanous act, maintained, 1721," p. 41.

known facts, it throws some light on the outcry raised against the comedy, which seems to have been but an echo of some preceding one. Cowley retreated into solitude, where he found none of the agrestic charms of the landscapes of his muse. When in the world, Sprat says, "he had never wanted for constant health and strength of body;" but, thrown into solitude, he carried with him a wounded spirit—the Ode of Brutus and the condemnation of his comedy were the dark spirits that haunted his cottage. Ill health soon succeeded low spirits—he pined in dejection, and perished a victim of the finest and most injured feelings.

But before we leave *the melancholy Cowley*, he shall speak the feelings, which here are not exaggerated. In this Chronicle of Literary Calamity, no passage ought to be more memorable than the solemn confession of one of the most amiable of men and poets.

Thus he expresses himself in the preface to his "Cutter of Coleman Street:"

"We are, therefore, wonderful wise men, and have a fine business of it; we, who spend our time in poetry. I do sometimes laugh, and am often angry with myself, when I think on it; and if I had a son inclined by nature to the same folly, I believe I should bind him from it by the strictest conjurations of a paternal blessing. For what can be more ridiculous than to labour to give men delight, whilst they labour, on their part, most earnestly, to take offence?"

And thus he closes the preface, in all the solemn expression of injured feelings:—"This I do affirm, that *from all which I have written*, I never *received the least benefit, or the least advantage; but, on the contrary, have felt sometimes the effects of malice and misfortune!*"

Cowley's ashes were deposited between those of Chaucer and Spenser; a marble monument was erected by a duke; and his eulogy was pronounced, on the day of his death, from the lips of royalty. The learned wrote, and the tuneful wept: well might the neglected bard, in his retirement, compose an epitaph on himself, living there "entombed, though not dead."

To this ambiguous state of existence he applies a conceit, not inelegant, from the tenderness of its imagery:

"Hic sparge flores, sparge breves rosas,
Nam vita gaudet mortua floribus;
Herbisque odoratis corona
Vatis adhuc cinerem calentem."

IMITATED.

Here scatter flowers and short-lived roses bring,
For life, though dead, enjoys the flowers of spring;
With breathing wreaths of fragrant herbs adorn
The yet warm embers in the poet's urn.

THE PAINS OF FASTIDIOUS EGOTISM.

I MUST place the author of "The Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors," who himself now ornaments that roll, among those who have participated in the misfortunes of literature.

HORACE WALPOLE was the inheritor of a name the most popular in Europe; he moved in the higher circles of society; and fortune had never denied him the ample gratification of his lively tastes in the elegant arts, and in curious knowledge. These were particular advantages. But Horace Walpole panted with a secret desire for literary celebrity; a full sense of his distinguished rank long suppressed the desire of venturing the name he bore to the uncertain fame of an author, and the caprice of vulgar critics. At length he pretended to shun authors, and to slight the honours of authorship. The cause of this contempt has been attributed to the perpetual consideration of his rank. But was this bitter contempt of so early a date? Was Horace Walpole a Socrates before his time? was he born that prodigy of indifference, to despise the secret object he languished to possess? His early associates were not only noblemen, but literary noblemen; and need he have been so petulantly fastidious at bearing the venerable title of author, when he saw Lyttelton, Chesterfield, and other peers, proud of wearing the blue riband of literature? No! it was after he had become an author that he contemned authorship; and it was not the precocity of his sagacity, but the maturity of his experience, that made him willing enough to undervalue literary honours, which were not sufficient to satisfy his desires.

Let us estimate the genius of Horace Walpole, by analysing his talents, and inquiring into the nature of his works.

His taste was highly polished; his vivacity attained to brilliancy*; and his picturesque fancy,

* In his letters there are uncommon instances of vivacity, whenever pointed against authors. The following have not yet met the public eye. What can be more maliciously pungent than this on Spence? "As I knew Mr. J. Spence, I do not think I should have been so much delighted as Dr. Kippis with reading his letters. He was a good-natured harmless little soul, but more like a silver penny than a genius. It was a neat fiddle faddle bit of sterling, that had read good books, and kept good company; but was too trifling for use, and only fit to please a child."—On Dr. Nash's first volume of 'Worcestershire': "It is a folio of prodigious corpulence, and yet dry enough; but it is finely dressed with many heads and views." He characterises Pennant; "*He* is not one of our plodders (alluding to Gough); rather the other extreme; his *corporal* spirits (for I cannot call them *animal*) do not allow him to digest anything. He gave a round jump from ornithology to antiquity, and, as if they had any relation,

easily excited, was soon extinguished; his playful wit and keen irony were perpetually exercised in his observations on life, and his memory was stored with the most amusing knowledge, but much too lively to be accurate; for his studies were but his sports. But other qualities of genius must distinguish the great author, and even him who would occupy that leading rank in the literary republic our author aspired to fill. He lived too much in that class of society which is little favourable to genius; he exerted neither profound thinking, nor profound feeling; and too volatile to attain to the pathetic, that higher quality of genius, he was so imbued with the petty elegances of society, that every impression of grandeur in the human character was deadened in the breast of the polished cynic.

Horace Walpole was not a man of genius,—his most pleasing, if not his great talent, lay in letter-writing; here he was without a rival*; but he probably divined, when he condescended to become an author, that something more was required than the talents he exactly possessed. In his latter days he felt this more sensibly, which will appear in those confessions which I have extracted from an unpublished correspondence.

Conscious of possessing the talent which amuses, yet feeling his deficient energies, he resolved to provide various substitutes for genius itself; and to acquire reputation, if he could not grasp at celebrity. He raised a printing-press at his Gothic castle, by which means he rendered small editions of his works valuable from their rarity, and much talked of, because seldom seen. That this is true, appears from the following extract from his unpublished correspondence with a literary friend. It alludes to his "Anecdotes of Painting in England," of which the first edition only consisted of 300 copies.

"Of my new fourth volume I printed 600; but, as they can be had, I believe not a third part is sold. This is a very plain lesson to me, that my editions sell for their curiosity, and not for any merit in them—and so they would if I printed Mother Goose's Tales, and but a few. If I am humbled as an author, I may be vain as a printer; and when one has nothing else to be vain of, it is certainly very little worth while to be proud of that."

There is a distinction between the author of great connexions and the mere author. In the one case, the man may give a temporary existence to his books; but in the other, it is the book which gives existence to the man.

Walpole's writings seem to be constructed on a certain principle, by which he gave them a sudden, rather than a lasting existence. In historical research, our adventurer startled the world by maintaining paradoxes which attacked the opinions, or changed the characters, established for centuries. Singularity of opinion, vivacity of ridicule, and polished epigrams in prose, were the means by which Horace Walpole sought distinction.

In his works of imagination, he felt he could not trust to himself—the natural pathetic was utterly denied him. But he had fancy and ingenuity; he had recourse to the *marvellous* in imagination, on the principle he had adopted the *parodoxical* in history. Thus, "The Castle of Otranto," and "The Mysterious Mother," are the productions of ingenuity rather than genius; and display the miracles of art, rather than the spontaneous creations of nature.

All his literary works, like the ornamented edifice he inhabited, were constructed on the same artificial principle; an old paper lodging-house, converted by the magician of taste into a Gothic castle, full of scenic effects.

"A Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors" was itself a classification which only an idle amateur could have projected, and only the most agreeable narrator of anecdotes could have seasoned. These splendid scribblers are for the greater part no authors at all †.

thought he understood everything that lay between them. The report of his being disordered is not true; he has been with me, and at least is as composed as ever I saw him." His literary correspondence with his friend Cole abounds with this easy satirical criticism—He delighted to ridicule authors!—as well as to starve the miserable artists he so grudgingly paid. In the very volumes he celebrated the arts, he disgraced them by his penuriousness; so that he loved to indulge his avarice at the expense of his vanity!

* This opinion on Walpole's talent for letter-writing was published in 1812, many years before the public had the present collection of his letters; my prediction has been amply verified. He wrote a great number to Bentley, the son of Dr. Bentley, who ornamented Gray's works with some extraordinary designs. Walpole, who was always proud and capricious, observes his friend Cole, broke with Bentley because he would bring his wife with him to Strawberry-hill. He then asked Bentley for all his letters back, but he would not in return give Bentley's own.

This whole correspondence abounded with literature, criticism, and wit, of the most original and brilliant composition. This is the opinion of no friend, but an admirer, and a good judge; for it was Bentley's own.

† Walpole's characters are not often to be relied on, witness his injustice to Hogarth as a painter, and his insolent calumny of Charles I. His literary opinions of James I. and of Sidney, might have been written without any acquaintance with the works he has so maliciously criticised. In his account of Sidney he had silently passed over the "Defence of Poetry;" and in his second edition has written this avowal that "he had forgotten it; a proof that I at least did not think it sufficient foundation for so

His attack on our peerless Sidney, whose fame was more mature than his life, was formed on the same principle as his "Historic Doubts" on Richard III. Horace Walpole was as willing to vilify the truly great, as to beautify deformity, when he imagined that the fame he was destroying or conferring, reflected back on himself. All these works were plants of sickly delicacy, which could never endure the open air, and only lived in the artificial atmosphere of a private collection.—Yet at times the flowers, and the planter of the flowers, were roughly shaken by an uncivil breeze.

His "Anecdotes of Painting in England," is a most entertaining catalogue. He gives the feelings of the distinct eras with regard to the arts; yet his pride was never gratified when he reflected that he had been writing the work of Vertue, who had collected the materials, but could not have given the philosophy. His great age and his good sense opened his eyes on himself; and Horace Walpole seems to have judged too contemptuously of Horace Walpole. The truth is, he was mortified he had not and never could obtain, a literary peerage; and he never respected the commoner's seat. At these moments, too frequent in his life, he contemns authors, and returns to sink back into all the self-complacency of aristocratic indifference.

This cold unfeeling disposition for literary men, this disguised malice of envy, and this eternal vexation at his own disappointments,—break forth in his correspondence with one of those literary characters, with whom he kept on terms while they were kneeling to him in the humility of worship, or moved about to fetch or to carry his little quests of curiosity in town or country*.

The following literary confessions illustrate this character.

"*June*, 1778.

"I have taken a thorough dislike to being an author; and, if it would not look like begging you to compliment one by contradicting me, I would tell you what I am most seriously convinced of, that I find what small share of parts I had, grown dulled. And when I perceive it myself, I may well believe that others would not be less sharp-sighted. *It is very natural*; mine were *spirits* rather than *parts*; and as time has rebated the one, it must surely destroy *their resemblance* to the other."

In another letter:—

"I set very little value on myself; as a man, I am a very faulty one; and *as an author, a very middling one*, which *whoever thinks a comfortable rank, is not at all of my opinion*. Pray convince me that you think I mean sincerely, by not answering me with a compliment. It is very weak to be pleased with flattery; the stupidest of all delusions to beg it. From you I should take it ill. We have known one another almost forty years."

There were times when Horace Walpole's natural taste for his studies returned with all the vigour of passion—but his volatility, and his desultory life, perpetually scattered his firmest resolutions into air. This conflict appears beautifully described when the view of King's College, Cambridge, throws his mind into meditation; and the passion for study and seclusion instantly kindled his emotions, lasting, perhaps, as long as the letter which describes them occupied in writing.

"*May* 22, 1777.

"The beauty of King's College, Cambridge, now it is restored, penetrated me with a visionary longing to be a monk in it. Though my life has been passed in turbulent scenes, in pleasures or rather pastimes, and in much fashionable dissipation; still, books, antiquity, and virtue, kept hold of a corner of my heart: and since necessity has forced me of late years to be a man of business, my disposition tends to be a recluse for what remains—but it will not be my lot; and though there is some excuse for the young doing what they like, I doubt an old man should do nothing but what he ought, and I hope doing one's duty is the best preparation for death. Sitting with one's

high a character as he acquired." How heartless was the polished cynicism which could dare to hazard this false criticism! Nothing can be more imposing than his volatile and caustic criticisms on the works of James I., yet he had probably never opened that folio he so poignantly ridicules. He doubts whether two pieces "The Prince's Cabala," and "The Duty of a King in his Royal Office," were genuine productions of James I. The truth is that both these works are nothing more than extracts printed with those separate titles and drawn from the king's "Basilicon Doron." He had probably neither read the extracts nor the original.

* It was such a person as Cole of Milton, his correspondent of forty years, who lived at a distance, and obsequious to his wishes, always looking up to him, though never with a parallel glance—with whom he did not quarrel, though if Walpole could have read the private notes *Cole* made in his MSS. at the time he was often writing the civilest letters of admiration,—even *Cole* would have been cashiered from his correspondence. *Walpole* could not endure equality in literary men.—Bentley observed to Cole, that Walpole's pride and hauteur were excessive; which betrayed themselves in the treatment of *Gray*, who had himself too much pride and spirit *to forgive it* when matters were made up between them, and Walpole invited Gray to Strawberry-hill. When *Gray* came, he without any ceremony told Walpole, that though he waited on him as civility required, yet by *no means would he ever be there on the terms of their former friendship, which he had totally cancelled.*—From Cole's MSS.

arms folded to think about it, is a very long way for preparing for it. If Charles V. had resolved to make some amends for his abominable ambition by doing good (his duty as a king), there would have been infinitely more merit than going to doze in a convent. One may avoid active guilt in a sequestered life, but the virtue of it is merely negative; the innocence is beautiful."

There had been moments when Horace Walpole even expressed the tenderest feelings for fame; and the following passage, written prior to the preceding ones, gives no indication of that contempt for literary fame, of which the close of this character will exhibit an extraordinary instance.

This letter relates an affecting event—he had just returned from seeing General Conway attacked by a paralytic stroke. Shocked by his appearance, he writes—

"It is, perhaps, to vent my concern that I write. It has operated such a revolution on my mind, as no time, at *my age*, can efface. It has at once damped every pursuit which my spirits had even now prevented me from being weaned from, I mean of virtu. It is like a mortal distemper in myself; for can amusements amuse, if there is but a glimpse, a vision of outliving one's friends! *I have had dreams in which I thought I wished for fame—it was not certainly posthumous fame at any distance; I feel, I feel it was confined to the memory of those I love.* It seems to me impossible for a man who has no friends, to do anything for fame—and to me the first position in friendship is, to intend one's friends should survive one—but it is not reasonable to oppress you, who are suffering gout, with my melancholy ideas. What I have said will tell you, what I hope so many years have told you, that I am very constant and sincere to friends of above forty years."

In a letter of a later date there is a remarkable confession, which harmonises with those already given.

"My pursuits have always been light, trifling, and tended to nothing but my casual amusement. I will not say, without a little vain ambition of showing some parts, but never with industry sufficient to make me apply to anything solid. My studies, if they could be called so, and my productions, were alike desultory. In my latter age I discovered the futility both of my objects and writings—I felt how insignificant is the reputation of an author of mediocrity; and that, being no genius, I only added one name more to a list of writers; but had told the world nothing but what it could as well be without. These reflections were the best proofs of my sense; and when I could see through my own vanity, there is less wonder in my discovering that such talents as I might have had, are impaired at seventy-two."

Thus humbled was Horace Walpole to himself!—there is an intellectual dignity, which this man of wit and sense was incapable of reaching—and it seems a retribution, that the scorner of true greatness should at length feel the poisoned chalice return to his own lips. He who had contemned the eminent men of former times, and quarrelled with and ridiculed every contemporary genius; who had affected to laugh at the literary fame he could not obtain,—at length came to scorn himself! and endured "the penal fires" of an author's hell, in undervaluing his own works, the productions of a long life!

The chagrin and disappointment of such an author were never less carelessly concealed, than in the following extraordinary letter:—

HORACE WALPOLE TO ——

"Arlington Street, April 27, 1773.

"Mr. Gough wants to be introduced to me! Indeed! I would see him, as he has been midwife to Masters; but he is so dull that he would only be troublesome—and besides, you know I shun authors, and would never have been one myself, if it obliged me to keep such bad company. They are always in earnest, and think their profession serious, and dwell upon trifles, and reverence learning. I laugh at all these things, and write only to laugh at them and divert myself. None of us are authors of any consequence, and it is the most ridiculous of all vanities to be vain of being *mediocre*. A page in a great author humbles me to the dust, and the conversation of those that are not superior to myself, reminds me of what will be thought of myself. I blush to flatter them, or to be flattered by them; and should dread letters being published some time or other, in which they would relate our interviews, and we should appear like those puny conceited witlings in Shenstone's and Hughes's correspondence, who give themselves airs from being in possession of the soil of Parnassus for the time being; as peers are proud because they enjoy the estates of great men who went before them. Mr. Gough is very welcome to see Strawberry-hill, or I would help him to any scraps in my possession that would assist his publications, though he is one of those industrious who are only re-burying the dead—but I cannot be acquainted with him; it is contrary to my system and my humour; and besides I know nothing of barrows and Danish entrenchments, and Saxon barbarisms and Phœnician characters—in short, I know nothing of those ages that knew nothing—then how should I be of use to modern literati?

All the Scotch metaphysicians have sent me their works. I did not read one of them, because I do not understand what is not understood by those that write about it; and I did not get acquainted with one of the writers. I should like to be intimate with Mr. Anstey, even though he wrote Lord Buckhorse, or with the author of the Heroic Epistle—I have no thirst to know the rest of my contemporaries, from the absurd bombast of Dr. Johnson down to the silly Dr. Goldsmith, though the latter changeling has had bright gleams of parts, and the former had sense, till he changed it for words, and sold it for a pension. Don't think me scornful. Recollect that I have seen Pope, and lived with Gray.—Adieu!"

Such a letter seems not to have been written by a literary man—it is the babble of a thoughtless wit and a man of the world. But it is worthy of him whose contracted heart could never open to patronage or friendship. From such we might expect the unfeeling observation in the "Anecdotes of Painting," that "want of patronage is the apology for want of genius. Milton and La Fontaine did not write in the bask of court-favour. A poet or a painter may want an equipage or a villa, by wanting protection; they can always afford to buy ink and paper, colours and pencil. Mr. Hogarth has received no honours, but universal admiration." Patronage, indeed, cannot convert dull men into men of genius, but it may preserve men of genius from becoming dull men. It might have afforded Dryden that studious leisure which he ever wanted, and which would have given us not imperfect tragedies, and uncorrected poems, but the regulated flights of a noble genius. It might have animated Gainsborough to have created an English school in landscape, which I have heard from those who knew him was his favourite yet neglected pursuit. But Walpole could insult that genius, which he wanted the generosity to protect!

The whole spirit of this man was penury. Enjoying an affluent income, he only appeared to patronise the arts which amused his tastes,—employing the meanest artists, at reduced prices, to ornament his own works, an economy which he bitterly reprehends in others who were compelled to practise it. He gratified his avarice at the expense of his vanity; the strongest passion must prevail. It was the simplicity of childhood in Chatterton, to imagine Horace Walpole could be a patron—but it is melancholy to record, that a slight protection might have saved such a youth. Gray abandoned this man of birth and rank, in the midst of their journey through Europe; Mason broke with him; even his humble correspondent Cole, this "friend of forty years," was often sent away in dudgeon; and he quarrelled with all the authors and artists he had ever been acquainted with. The Gothic castle at Strawberry-hill was rarely graced with living genius—there the greatest was Horace Walpole himself; but he had been too long waiting to see realised a magical vision of his hopes, which resembled the prophetic fiction of his own romance, that "the owner should grow too large for his house." After many years, having discovered that he still retained his mediocrity, he could never pardon the presence of that preternatural being whom the world considered a GREAT MAN.—Such was the feeling which dictated the close of the above letter; Johnson and Goldsmith were to be "scorned," since Pope and Gray were no more within the reach of his envy and his fear.

INFLUENCE OF A BAD TEMPER IN CRITICISM.

UNFRIENDLY to the literary character, some have imputed the brutality of certain authors to their literary habits, when it may be more truly said, that they derived their literature from their brutality. The spirit was envenomed before it entered into the fierceness of literary controversy, and the insanity was in the evil temper of the man before he roused our notice by his ravings. RITSON, the late antiquary of poetry (not to call him poetical), amazed the world by his vituperative railing at two authors of the finest taste in poetry, Warton and Percy; he carried criticism, as the discerning few had first surmised, to insanity itself; the character before us only approached it.

DENNIS attained to the ambiguous honour of being distinguished as "The Critic," and he may yet instruct us how the moral influences the literary character, and how a certain talent that can never mature itself into genius, like the pale fruit that hangs in the shade, ripens only into sourness.

As a Critic, in his own day, party for some time kept him alive; the art of criticism was a novelty at that period of our literature. He flattered some great men, and he abused three of the greatest; this was one mode of securing popularity; because, by this contrivance, he divided the town into two parties; and the irascibility and satire of Pope and Swift were not less serviceable to him, than the partial panegyrics of Dryden and Congreve. Johnson revived him, for his minute attack on Addison; and Kippis, feebly voluminous, and with the cold affectation of candour, allows him to occupy a place in our literary history, too large in the eye of Truth and Taste.

Let us say all the good we can of him, that we may not be interrupted in a more important inquiry. Dennis once urged fair pretensions to

the office of critic. Some of his "Original Letters," and particularly the "Remarks on Prince Arthur," written in his vigour, attain even to classical criticism.* Aristotle and Bossu lay open before him, and he develops and sometimes illustrates their principles, with close reasoning. Passion had not yet blinded the young critic with rage; and in that happy moment, Virgil occupied his attention even more than Blackmore.

The prominent feature in his literary character was good sense; but in literature, though not in life, good sense is a penurious virtue. Dennis could not be carried beyond the cold line of a precedent, and before he ventured to be pleased, he was compelled to look into Aristotle. His learning was the bigotry of literature. It was ever Aristotle explained by Dennis. But in the explanation of the obscure text of his master, he was led into such frivolous distinctions, and tasteless propositions, that his works deserve inspection, as examples of the manner of a true mechanical critic.

This blunted feeling of the mechanical critic was at first concealed from the world in the pomp of critical erudition; but when he trusted to himself, and, destitute of taste and imagination, became a Poet and a Dramatist, the secret of the Royal Midas was revealed. As his evil temper prevailed, he forgot his learning, and lost the moderate sense which he seemed once to have possessed. Rage, malice, and dulness, were the heavy residuum; and now he much resembled that congenial soul whom the ever-witty South compared to the tailor's goose, which is at once hot and heavy.

Dennis was sent to Cambridge by his father, a saddler, who imagined a genius had been born in the family. He travelled in France and Italy, and on his return held in contempt every pursuit but poetry and criticism. He haunted the literary coteries, and dropped into a galaxy of wits and noblemen. At a time when our literature, like our politics, was divided into two factions, Dennis enlisted himself under Dryden and Congreve†; and, as legitimate criticism was then an awful novelty in the nation, the young critic, recent from the Stagirite, soon became an important, and even a tremendous spirit. Pope is said to have regarded his judgment, and Mallet, when young, tremblingly submitted a poem, to live or die by his breath. One would have imagined that the elegant studies he was cultivating, the views of life which had opened on him, and the polished circle around, would have influenced the grossness which was the natural growth of the soil. But ungracious Nature kept fast hold of the mind of Dennis!

His personal manners were characterised by their abrupt violence. Once dining with Lord Halifax he became so impatient of contradiction, that he rushed out of the room, overthrowing the side-board. Inquiring on the next day how he had behaved, Moyle observed, "You went away like the devil, taking one corner of the house with you." The wits, perhaps, then began to suspect their young Zoilus's dogmatism.

The actors refused to perform one of his tragedies to empty houses, but they retained some excellent thunder which Dennis had invented; it rolled one night when Dennis was in the pit, and it was applauded! Suddenly starting up, he cried to the audience, "By G—, they won't act my tragedy, but they steal my thunder!" Thus when reading Pope's "Essay on Criticism," he came to the character of Appius, he suddenly flung down the new poem, exclaiming, "By G—, he means me!" He is painted to the life.

> "*Lo! Appius reddens* at each word you speak,
> And stares tremendous with a threatening eye,
> Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry."

I complete this picture of Dennis with a very extraordinary caricature, which Steele, in one of his papers of "The Theatre," has given of Dennis. I shall, however, disentangle the threads, and pick out what I consider not to be caricature, but resemblance.

"His motion is quick and sudden, turning on all sides, with a suspicion of every object, as if he had done or feared some extraordinary mischief. You see wickedness in his meaning, but folly of countenance, that betrays him to be unfit for the execution of it. He starts, stares, and looks round him. This constant shuffle of haste without speed, makes the man thought a little touched; but the vacant look of his two eyes gives you to understand, that he could never run out of his wits, which seemed not so much to be lost, as to want employment; they are not so much astray, as they are a wool-gathering. He has the face and surliness of

* It is curious to observe, that Kippis, who classifies with the pomp of enumeration his heap of pamphlets, imagines that, as Blackmore's Epic is consigned to oblivion, so likewise must be the criticism, which, however, he confesses he could never meet with. An odd fate attends Dennis's works: his criticism on a bad work ought to survive it, as good works have survived his criticisms.

† See in Dennis's "Original Letters" one to Tonson, entitled, "On the conspiracy against the reputation of Mr. Dryden." It was in favour of *folly* against *wisdom*, *weakness* against *power*, &c.; *Pope* against *Dryden*. He closes with a well-turned period. "Wherever genius runs through a work, I forgive its faults; and wherever that is wanting, no beauties can touch me. Being struck by Mr. Dryden's genius, I have no eyes for his errors; and I have no eyes for his enemies' beauties, because I am not struck by their genius."

a mastiff, which has often saved him from being treated like a cur, till some more sagacious than ordinary found his nature, and used him accordingly. Unhappy being! terrible without, fearful within! Not a wolf in sheep's clothing, but a sheep in a wolf's."

However anger may have a little coloured this portrait, its truth may be confirmed from a variety of sources. If Sallust, with his accustomed penetration, in characterising the violent emotions of Catiline's restless mind, did not forget its indication in "his walk now quick and now slow," it may be allowed to think that the character of Dennis was alike to be detected in his habitual surliness.

Even in his old age, for our chain must not drop a link, his native brutality never forsook him. Thomson and Pope charitably supported the veteran Zoilus at a benefit play; and Savage, who had nothing but a verse to give, returned them very poetical thanks, in the name of Dennis. He was then blind and old, but his critical ferocity had no old age; his surliness overcame every grateful sense, and he swore as usual, "They could be no one's but that *fool* Savage's,"—an evidence of his sagacity and brutality*! This was, perhaps, the last peevish snuff shaken from the dismal link of criticism; for, a few days after, was the redoubted Dennis numbered with the mighty dead.

He carried the same fierceness into his style, and commits the same ludicrous extravagancies in literary composition as in his manners. Was Pope really sore at the Zoilian style? He has himself spared me the trouble of exhibiting Dennis's gross personalities, by having collected them at the close of the Dunciad; specimens which show how low false wit and malignity can get to by hard pains. I will throw into the note a curious illustration of the anti-poetical notions of a mechanical critic, who has no wing to dip into the hues of the imagination†.

In life and in literature we meet with men who seem endowed with an obliquity of understanding, yet active and busy spirits; but, as activity is only valuable in proportion to the capacity that puts all in motion, so, when ill directed, the intellect, warped by nature, only becomes more crooked and fantastical. A kind of frantic enthusiasm breaks forth in their actions and their language, and often they seem ferocious when they are only foolish. We may thus account for the manners and style of Dennis, pushed almost to the verge of insanity, and acting on him very much like insanity itself; a circumstance which the quick vengeance of wit seized on, in the humorous "Narrative of Dr.

* There is an epigram on Dennis by Savage, which Johnson has preserved in his life; and I feel it to be a very correct likeness, although Johnson censures Savage for writing an epigram against Dennis, while he was living in great familiarity with the critic. Perhaps that was the happiest moment to write the epigram. The anecdote in the text doubtless prompted "the fool" to take this fair revenge and just chastisement. Savage has brought out the features strongly, in these touches—

> "Say what revenge on Dennis can be had,
> Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad.
> On one so poor you cannot take the law,
> On one so old your sword you scorn to draw.
> Uncaged then, let the harmless monster rage,
> Secure in dulness, madness, want, and age!"

† Dennis points his heavy cannon of criticism, and thus bombards that aerial edifice, the "Rape of the Lock." He is inquiring into the nature of *poetical machinery*, which, he oracularly pronounces, should be religious, or allegorical, or political; asserting the "Lutrin" of Boileau to be a trifle only in appearance, covering the deep political design of reforming the Popish church!—With the yard of criticism, he takes measure of the slender graces and tiny elegance of Pope's aerial machines, as "less considerable than the *human persons*, which is *without precedent*. Nothing can be so contemptible as the *persons* or so foolish as the understandings of these *hobgoblins*. Ariel's speech is one continued impertinence. After he has talked to them of black omens and dire disasters that threaten his heroine, those bugbears dwindle to the breaking a piece of china, to staining a petticoat, the losing a fan, or a bottle of sal volatile—and what makes Ariel's speech more ridiculous is the *place* where it is spoken, on the sails and cordage of Belinda's barge." And then he compares the Sylphs to the Discord of Homer, whose feet are upon the earth, and head in the skies. "They are, indeed, beings so diminutive that they bear the same proportion to the rest of the intellectual, that *Eels in vinegar* do to the rest of the material world; the latter are only to be seen through microscopes, and the former only through the false optics of a Rosicrucian understanding." And finally, he decides that "these diminutive beings are only *Sawney* (that is, Alexander Pope), taking the change; for it is he, a little lump of flesh that talks, instead of a little spirit." Dennis's profound gravity contributes an additional feature of the burlesque to these heroi-comic poems themselves, only that Dennis cannot be playful, and will not be good-humoured.

On the same tasteless principle he decides on the improbability of that incident in the "Conscious Lovers" of Steele, raised by Bevil, who, having received great obligations from his father, has promised not to marry without his consent. On this Dennis, who rarely in his critical progress will stir a foot without authority, quotes four formidable pages from Locke's "Essay on Government," to prove that, at the age of discretion, a man is free to dispose of his own actions! One would imagine that Dennis was arguing like a special pleader, rather than developing the involved action of an affecting drama. Are there critics who would pronounce Dennis to be a very *sensible* brother? It is here too he calls Steele "a two-penny author," alluding to the price of the "Tatlers"—but this cost Dennis dear!

Robert Norris, concerning the Frenzy of Mr. John Dennis, an officer of the Custom-house."

It is curious to observe, that Dennis, in the definition of genius, describes himself; he says, "Genius is caused by a *furious joy* and *pride of soul* on the conception of an extraordinary hint. Many men have their *hints* without their motions of *fury and pride of soul*, because they want fire enough to agitate their spirits; and these we call cold writers. Others, who have a great deal of fire, but have not excellent organs, feel the forementioned *motions*, without the extraordinary *hints*, and these we call fustian writers." His *motions* and his *hints*, as he describes them, in regard to cold or fustian writers, seem to include the extreme points of his own genius.

Another feature strongly marks the race of the Dennises. With a half-consciousness of deficient genius, they usually idolise some chimera, by adopting some extravagant principle; and they consider themselves as original when they are only absurd.

Dennis had ever some misshapen idol of the mind, which he was perpetually caressing with the zeal of perverted judgment or monstrous taste. Once his frenzy ran against the Italian Opera; and in his "Essay on Public Spirit," he ascribes its decline to its unmanly warblings. I have seen a long letter by Dennis to the Earl of Oxford, written to congratulate his lordship on his accession to power, and the high hopes of the nation; but the greater part of the letter runs on the Italian Opera, while Dennis instructs the Minister that the national prosperity can never be effected while this general corruption of the three kingdoms lies open!

Dennis has more than once recorded two material circumstances in the life of a true critic; these are his *ill-nature* and the *public neglect*.

"I make no doubt," says he, "that upon perusal of the critical part of these letters, the *old accusation* will be brought against me, and there will be a *fresh outcry* among thoughtless people that I am *an ill-natured man*."

He entertained exalted opinions of his own powers, and he deeply felt their public neglect.

"While others," he says in his tracts, "have been *too much encouraged*, I have been *too much neglected*"—his favourite system, that religion gives principally to great poetry its spirit and enthusiasm, was an important point, which, he says, "has been left to be treated by *a person who has the honour of being your lordship's countryman*—your lordship knows, that persons *so much and so long oppressed as I have been*, have been always allowed to *say things concerning themselves* which in others might be offensive."

His vanity, we see, was equal to his vexation, and, as he grew old, he became more enraged; and, writing too often without Aristotle or Locke by his side, he gave the town pure Dennis, and almost ceased to be read. "The oppression," of which he complains, might not be less imaginary than his alarm, while a treaty was pending with France, that he should be delivered up to the Grand Monarque for having written a tragedy, which no one could read, against his majesty.

It is melancholy, but it is useful, to record the mortifications of such authors. Dennis had, no doubt, laboured with zeal which could never meet a reward, and, perhaps, amid his critical labours, he turned often with an aching heart, from their barren contemplation to that of the tranquillity he might have derived from an humbler avocation.

It was not literature then that made the mind coarse, brutalising the habits and inflaming the style of Dennis. He had thrown himself among the walks of genius, and aspired to fix himself on a throne to which Nature had refused him a legitimate claim. What a lasting source of vexation and rage, even for a long-lived patriarch of criticism!

Accustomed to suspend the scourge over the heads of the first authors of the age, he could not sit at a table, or enter a coffee-house, without exerting the despotism of a literary dictator. How could the mind, that had devoted itself to the contemplation of master-pieces only to reward its industry by detailing to the public their human frailties, experience one hour of amenity, one idea of grace, one generous impulse of sensibility?

But the poor critic himself at length fell, really more the victim of his criticisms than the genius he had insulted. Having incurred the public neglect, the blind and helpless Cacus in his den sunk fast into contempt, dragged on a life of misery, and in his last days, scarcely vomiting his fire and smoke, became the most pitiable creature, receiving the alms he craved from triumphant genius.

DISAPPOINTED GENIUS

TAKES A FATAL DIRECTION BY ITS ABUSE.

How the moral and literary character are reciprocally influenced, may be traced in the character of a personage peculiarly apposite to these inquiries. This worthy of literature is ORATOR HENLEY—who is rather known traditionally than historically*. He is so overwhelmed with the

* So little is known of this singular man, that Mr. Dibdin, in his very curious "Bibliomania," was not able to recollect any other details than those he transcribed from Warburton's "Commentatory on the Dunciad." In Mr. Nichols's "History of Leicestershire," a more copious account of Henley may be found: to their facts something is here added. It was, however, difficult to glean after so

echoed satire of Pope, and his own extravagant conduct for many years, that I should not care to extricate him, had I not discovered a feature in the character of Henley not yet drawn, and constituting no inferior calamity among authors.

Henley stands in his "gilt tub" in the Dunciad; and a portrait of him hangs in the picture-gallery of the Commentary. Pope's verse and Warburton's notes are the pickle and the bandages for any Egyptian mummy of dulness, who will last as long as the pyramid that incloses him. I shall transcribe for the reader's convenience the lines of Pope:—

"Embrown'd with native bronze, lo! Henley stands,
Tuning his voice, and balancing his hands;
How fluent nonsense trickles from his tongue!
How sweet the periods, neither said nor sung!
Still break the benches, Henley, with thy strain,
While Sherlock, Hare, and Gibson, preach in vain.
Oh! great restorer of the good old stage,
Preacher at once, and Zany of thy age*!"

It will surprise when I declare that this buffoon was an indefatigable student, a proficient in all the learned languages, an elegant poet, and, withal, a wit of no inferior class. It remains to discover why "the Preacher" became "the Zany."

Henley was of St. John's College, Cambridge, and was distinguished for the ardour and pertinacity of his studies; he gave evident marks of genius. There is a letter of his to the Spectator, signed *Peter de Quir*, which abounds with local wit and quaint humour. He had not attained his twenty-second year when he published a poem, entitled "Esther, Queen of Persia†," written amid graver studies; for three years after, Henley being M.A. published his "Complete Linguist," consisting of grammars of ten languages.

The poem itself must not be passed by in silent notice. It is preceded by a learned preface, in which the poet discovers his intimate knowledge of oriental studies, with some etymologies from the Persic, the Hebrew, and the Greek, concerning the name and person of Ahasuerus, whom he makes to be Xerxes. The close of this preface gives another unexpected feature in the character of him who, the poet tells us, was "embrowned with *native* bronze,"—an unaffected modesty! Henley, alluding to a Greek paraphrase of Barnes, censures his faults without acrimony, and even apologises for them, by thus gracefully closing the preface: "These can only be alleviated by one plea, the youth of the author, which is a circumstance I hope the candid will consider in favour of the present writer!"

The poem is not destitute of imagination and harmony.

The pomp of the feast of Ahasuerus has all the luxuriance of Asiatic splendour; and the circumstances are selected with some fancy.

"The higher guests approach a room of state,
Where tissued couches all around were set
Labour'd with art; o'er ivory tables thrown,
Embroider'd carpets fell in folds adown.
The bowers and gardens of the court were near,
And open lights indulged the breathing air.

"Pillars of marble bore a silken sky,
While cords of purple and fine linen tie
In silver rings, the azure canopy.
Distinct with diamond stars the blue was seen,
And earth and seas were feign'd in emerald green;
A globe of gold, ray'd with a pointed crown,
Form'd in the midst almost a real sun."

Nor is Henley less skilful in the elegance of his sentiments, and in his development of the human character. When Esther is raised to the throne, the poet says,

"And Esther, though in robes, is Esther still."

And then sublimely exclaims,

"The heroic soul, amidst its bliss or woe,
Is never swell'd too high, nor sunk too low;
Stands, like its origin above the skies,
Ever the same great self, sedately wise;
Collected and prepared in every stage
To scorn a courting world, or bear its rage."

But wit which the Spectator has sent down to posterity, and poetry which gave the promise of excellence, did not bound the noble ambition of Henley; ardent in more important labours, he was perfecting himself in the learned languages, and carrying on a correspondence with eminent scholars.

He officiated as the master of the free-school at his native town in Leicestershire, then in a declining state; but he introduced many original improvements. He established a class for public elocution, recitations of the classics, orations, &c.; and arranged a method of enabling every scholar to give an account of his studies without the necessity of consulting others, or of being examined by particular questions. These miracles are indeed a little apocryphal; for they are drawn from that pseudo-gospel of his life, of which I am inclined to think he himself was the evangelist.

excellent a harvest-home. To the author of the "Life of Bowyer," and other works devoted to our authors, our literary history is more indebted, than to the labours of any other contemporary. He is the Prosper Marchand of English literature.

* It is, perhaps, unnecessary to point out this allusion of Pope to our ancient *mysteries*, where the *Clergy* were the *actors*; among which, the *Vice* or *Punch* was introduced.

† The title is, "Esther, Queen of Persia, an historical Poem, in four books; by John Henley, B. A. of St. John's College, Cambridge. 1714."

His grammar of ten languages was now finished; and his genius felt that obscure spot too circumscribed for his ambition. He parted from the inhabitants with their regrets; and came to the metropolis with thirty recommendatory letters.

Henley probably had formed those warm conceptions of patronage in which youthful genius cradles its hopes. Till 1724 he appears, however, to have obtained only a small living, and to have existed by translating and writing. Thus, after persevering studies, many successful literary efforts, and much heavy task-work, Henley found he was but a hireling author for the booksellers, and a salaried "Hyp-doctor" for the minister; for he received a stipend for this periodical paper, which was to cheer the spirits of the people by ridiculing the gloomy forebodings of Amhurst's "Craftsman." About this time the complete metamorphosis of the studious and ingenious John Henley began to branch out into its grotesque figure; and a curiosity in human nature was now about to be opened to public inspection. "The Preacher" was to personate "The Zany." His temper had become brutal, and he had gradually contracted a ferocity and grossness in his manners, which seem by no means to have been indicated in his purer days.—His youth was disgraced by no irregularities—it was studious and honourable. But he was now quick at vilifying the greatest characters, and, having a perfect contempt for all mankind, was resolved to live by making one half of the world laugh at the other. Such is the direction which disappointed genius has too often given to its talents.

He first affected oratory, and something of a theatrical attitude, in his sermons, which greatly attracted the populace; and he startled those preachers who had so long dozed over their own sermons, and who now finding themselves with but few slumberers about them, envied their Ciceronian brother,

> "Tuning his voice, and balancing his hands."

It was alleged against Henley, that "he drew the people too much from their parish churches, and was not so proper for a London Divine as a rural Pastor." He was offered a rustication, on a better living; but Henley did not come from the country to return to it.

There is a narrative of the life of Henley, which, subscribed by another person's name, he himself inserted in his "Oratory Transactions." As he had to publish himself this highly-seasoned biographical morsel, and as his face was then beginning to be "embrowned with bronze," he thus very impudently and very ingeniously apologises for the panegyric:—

"If any remark of the writer appears favourable to myself, and be judged apocryphal, it may, however, weigh in the opposite scale to some things less obligingly said of me; false praise being as pardonable as false reproach*."

In this narrative we are told, that when at college—

"He began to be uneasy that he had not the liberty of thinking, without incurring the scandal of heterodoxy; he was impatient that systems of all sorts were put into his hands ready carved out for him; it shocked him to find that he was commanded to believe against his judgment, and resolved some time or other to enter his protest against any person being bred like a slave, who is born an Englishman."

This is all very decorous, and nothing can be objected to the first cry of this reforming patriot, but a reasonable suspicion of its truth. If these sentiments were really in his mind at college, he deserves at least the praise of retention; for fifteen years were suffered to pass quietly without the patriotic volcano giving even a distant rumbling of the sulphureous matter concealed beneath. All that time had passed in the contemplation of church preferment, with the aerial perspective lighted by a visionary mitre. But Henley grew indignant at his disappointments, and suddenly resolved to reform "the gross impostures and faults that have long prevailed in the received *institutions* and *establishments* of *knowledge* and *religion*"—simply meaning that he wished to pull down the *Church* and the *University!*

But he was prudent before he was patriotic; he at first grafted himself on Whiston, adopting his opinions; and sent some queries by which it appears that Henley, previous to breaking with the church, was anxious to learn the power it had to punish him. The Arian Whiston was himself, from pure motives, suffering expulsion from Cambridge—for refusing his subscription to the Athanasian Creed; he was a pious man, and no buffoon, but a little crazed. Whiston afterwards discovered the character of his correspondent, he then requested the Bishop of London

"To summon Mr. Henley, the orator, whose vile history I knew so well, to come and tell it to the church. But the bishop said he could do nothing; since which time Mr. Henley has gone on for about twenty years without control every week, as an ecclesiastical mountebank, to abuse religion."

The most extraordinary project was now formed by Henley; he was to teach mankind universal

* This narrative is subscribed A. Welstede. Warburton maliciously quotes it as a life of Henley, written by Welsted—doubtless designed to lower the writer of that name, and one of the heroes of the Dunciad. The public have long been deceived by this artifice; the effect, I believe, of Warburton's dishonesty

knowledge from his lectures, and primitive Christianity from his sermons. He took apartments in Newport-market, and opened his "Oratory." He declared,

"He would teach more in one year than schools and universities did in five; and write and study twelve hours a day, and yet appear as untouched by the yoke, as if he never bore it."

In his "Idea of what is intended to be taught in the *Week-days' Universal Academy*," we may admire the fertility, and sometimes the grandeur of his views. His lectures and orations* are of a very different nature from what they are imagined to be; literary topics are treated with perspicuity and with erudition, and there is something original in the manner. They were, no doubt, larded and stuffed with many high-seasoned jokes, which Henley did not send to the printer.

* Every lecture is dedicated to some branch of the Royal Family. Among them one is on "University Learning," an attack.—"On the English History and Historians," extremely curious.—"On the Languages, Ancient and Modern," full of erudition.—"On the English Tongue," a valuable criticism at that moment when our style was receiving a new polish from Addison and Prior. Henley, acknowledging that these writers had raised *correctness* of expression to its utmost height, adds, though, "if I mistake not, something to the detriment of that *force* and *freedom* that ought, with the most concealed art, to be a perfect copy of nature, in all compositions." This is among the first notices of that artificial style which has vitiated our native idiom, substituting for its purity an affected delicacy, and for its vigour profuse ornament. Henley observes that, "to be perspicuous, pure, elegant, copious, and harmonious, are the chief good qualities of writing the English tongue; they are attained by study and practice, and lost by the contrary: but *imitation* is to be avoided; they cannot be made our own but by keeping the force of our understandings superior to our models; by *rendering our thoughts the original, and our words the copy.*"—"On Wit and Imagination," abounding with excellent criticism.—"On grave conundrums and serious buffoons, in defence of burlesque discourses, from the most weighty authorities."—"A Dissertation upon Nonsense." At the close he has a fling at his friend Pope; it was after the publication of the Dunciad. "Of Nonsense there are celebrated professors; Mr. Pope grows witty like Bays in the 'Rehearsal,' by selling bargains (his subscriptions for Homer), praising himself, laughing at his joke, and making his own works the test of any man's criticism; but he seems to be in some jeopardy; for the ghost of Homer has lately spoke to him in Greek, and Shakespeare resolves to bring him, as he has brought Shakespeare, to a tragical conclusion. Mr. Pope suggests the last choice of a subject for writing a book, by making the *Nonsense* of others his argument; while his own puts it out of any writer's power to confute him." In another fling at Pope, he gives the reason why Mr. Pope adds the dirty dialect to that of the water, and is in love with the Nymphs of Fleet-ditch; and in a lecture on the spleen, he announced "an anatomical discovery, that Mr. Pope's spleen is bigger than his head!"

Henley was a charlatan and a knave; but in all his charlatanerie and his knavery he indulged the reveries of genius; many of which have been realised since; and, if we continue to laugh at Henley, it will indeed be cruel, for we shall be laughing at ourselves! Among the objects which Henley discriminates in his general design, were, to supply the want of a university, or universal school, in this capital, for persons of all ranks, professions, and capacities;—to encourage a literary correspondence with great men and learned bodies; the communication of all discoveries and experiments in science and the arts; to form an amicable society for the encouragement of learning, "in order to cultivate, adorn, and exalt the genius of Britain;" to lay a foundation for an English Academy; to give a standard to our language, and a digest to our history; to revive the ancient schools of philosophy and elocution, which last has been reckoned by Pancirollus among the *artes perditæ*. All these were "to bring all the parts of knowledge into the narrowest compass, placing them in the clearest light, and fixing them to the utmost certainty." The religion of the Oratory was to be that of the primitive Church in the first ages of the four first general councils, approved by parliament in the first year of the reign of Elizabeth. "The Church of England is really with us; we appeal to her own principles, and we shall not deviate from her, unless she deviates from herself." Yet his "Primitive Christianity" had all the sumptuous pomp of popery; his creeds and doxologies are printed in the red letter, and his liturgies in the black; his pulpit blazed in gold and velvet (Pope's "gilt tub"); while his "Primitive Eucharist" was to be distributed with all the ancient forms of celebrating the sacrifice of the altar, which he says, "are so noble, so just, sublime, and perfectly harmonious, that the change has been made to an unspeakable disadvantage." It was restoring the decorations and the mummery of the mass! He assumed even a higher tone, and dispersed medals, like those of Louis XIV., with the device of a sun near the meridian, and a motto, *Ad summa*, with an inscription expressive of the genius of this new adventurer, *Inveniam viam aut faciam!* There was a snake in the grass; it is obvious that Henley, in improving literature and philosophy, had a deeper design—to set up a new sect! He called himself "a Rationalist," and on his death-bed repeatedly cried out, "Let my notorious enemies know I die a Rational*."

His address to the town† excited public curiosity

* Thus he anticipated the term, since become so notorious among German theologians.

† It is preserved in "The Historical Register," vol. xi. for 1726. It is curious and well written.

to the utmost; and the floating crowds were repulsed by their own violence from this new paradise, where "The Tree of Knowledge" was said to be planted. At the succeeding meeting "the Restorer of Ancient Eloquence" informed "persons in chairs that they must come sooner." He first commenced by subscriptions to be raised from "Persons eminent in Arts and Literature," who, it seems, were lured by the seductive promise, that, "if they had been virtuous or penitents, they should be commemorated;" an oblique hint at a panegyrical puff. In the decline of his popularity he permitted his doorkeeper, whom he dignifies with the title of *Ostiary*, to take a shilling! But he seems to have been popular for many years; even when his auditors were but few, they were of the better order*; and in notes respecting him which I have seen, by a contemporary, he is called "the reverend and learned." His favourite character was that of a Restorer of Eloquence; and he was not destitute of the qualifications of a fine orator, a good voice, graceful gesture, and forcible elocution. Warburton justly remarked, "Sometimes he broke jests, and sometimes that bread which he called the Primitive Eucharist." He would degenerate into buffoonery on solemn occasions. His address to the Deity was at first awful, and seemingly devout; but, once expatiating on the several sects who would certainly be damned, he prayed that the Dutch might be *undamm'd!* He undertook to show the ancient use of the petticoat, by quoting the Scriptures where the mother of Samuel is said to have made him "*a little coat*," ergo, a PETTICOAT†! His advertisements were mysterious ribaldry to attract curiosity, while his own good sense would frequently chastise those who could not resist it; his auditors came in folly, but they departed in good-humour‡. These advertisements were usually preceded by a sort of motto, generally a sarcastic allusion to some public transaction of the preceding week §. Henley pretended to great impartiality; and when two preachers had animadverted on him, he issued an advertisement, announcing "A Lecture that will be a challenge to the Rev. Mr. Batty, and the Rev. Mr. Albert. Letters are sent to them on this head, and *a free standing place* is there to be had *gratis*." Once Henley offered to admit of a disputation, and that he would impartially determine the merits of the contest. It happened that Henley this time was overmatched; for two Oxonians, supported by a strong party to awe his "marrowboners," as the butchers were called, said to be in the Orator's pay, entered the list: the one to defend the *ignorance*, the other the *impudence*, of the Restorer of Eloquence himself. As there was a door behind the rostrum, which led to his house, the Orator silently dropped out, postponing the award to some happier day.

This age of lecturers may find their model in Henley's "Universal Academy," and if any should

* Gent. Mag. vol. lvii. p. 876.

† His "Defence of the Oratory" is a curious performance. He pretends to derive his own from great authority. "St. Paul is related, Acts 28, to have dwelt *two whole years in his own hired house*, and to have received all that came in unto him, teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. This was at *Rome*, and doubtless was his practice in his other travels, there being the same reason in the thing to produce elsewhere the like circumstances." He proceeds to show "the calumnies and reproaches, and the novelty and impiety, with which Christianity, at its first setting out, was charged, as a mean, abject institution, not only useless and unserviceable, but pernicious to the public and its professors, as the refuse of the world." —Of the false accusations raised against Jesus—all this he applies to himself and his oratory—and he concludes, that "Bringing men to think rightly will always be reckoned a depraving of their minds by those who are desirous to keep them in a mistake, and who measure all truth by the standard of their own narrow opinions, views, and passions. The principles of this institution are those of right reason: the first ages of Christianity; true facts, clear criticism, and polite literature—if these corrupt the mind, to find a place where the mind will not be corrupted, will be impracticable." Thus speciously could "the Orator" reason, raising himself to the height of apostolical purity. And, when he was accused that he *did all for lucre*, he retorted, that "some *do nothing* for it;" and that "he preached more charity sermons than any clergyman in the kingdom."

‡ He once advertised an oration on marriage, which drew together an overflowing assembly of females at which, solemnly shaking his head, he told the ladies, that "he was afraid, that oftentimes, as well as now, they came to church in hopes to get husbands, rather than be instructed by the preacher;" to which he added a piece of wit, not quite decent. He congregated the trade of shoemakers, by offering to show the most expeditious method of making shoes: he held out a boot, and cut off the leg part. He gave a lecture, which he advertised was "for the instruction of those who do not like it; it was on the philosophy, history, and great use of *Nonsense* to the learned, political, and polite world, who excel in it."

§ Dr. Cobden, one of George the Second's chaplains, having, in 1748, preached a sermon at St. James's, from these words, "Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness," it gave so much displeasure, that the doctor was struck out of the list of chaplains; and the next Saturday, the following parody of his text appeared as a motto to Henley's advertisement:

"Away with the wicked before the king,
And away with the wicked behind him;
His throne it will bless
With righteousness,
And we shall know where to find him."

CHALMERS'S BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY.

aspire to bring themselves down to his genius, I furnish them with hints of anomalous topics. In the second number of "The Oratory Transactions," is a diary from July 1726 to August 1728. It forms, perhaps, an unparalleled chronicle of the vagaries of the human mind. These archives of cunning, of folly, and of literature, are divided into two diaries; the one "The Theological or Lord's days' subjects of the Oratory;" the other, "The Academical or Week-days' subjects." I can only note a few. It is easy to pick out ludicrous specimens; for he had a quaint humour peculiar to himself; but among these numerous topics are many curious for their knowledge and ingenuity.

"The last Wills and Testaments of the Patriarchs."

"An Argument to the Jews, with a proof that they ought to be Christians, for the same reason which they ought to be Jews."

"St. Paul's Cloak, Books, and Parchments, left at Troas."

"The tears of Magdalen, and the joy of Angels."

"New Converts in Religion." After pointing out the names of "Courayer and others, the D— of W—n, the Protestantism of the P—, the conversion of the Rev. Mr. B—e, and Mr. Har—y," he closes with "Origen's opinion of Satan's conversion; with the choice and balance of Religion in all countries."

There is one remarkable entry:—

"Feb. 11. This week, all Mr. Henley's writings were seized, to be examined by the State. *Vide Magnam Chartam*, and *Eng. Lib.*"

It is evident by what follows that the *personalities* he made use of, were one means of attracting auditors.

"On the action of Cicero, and the beauty of Eloquence, and on living characters; of action in the Senate, at the Bar, and in the Pulpit—of the Theatrical in all men. The manner of my Lord —, Sir —, Dr. —, the B. of —, being a proof how all life is playing something, but with different action."

In a Lecture on the History of Bookcraft, an account was given

"Of the plenty of books, and dearth of sense; the advantages of the Oratory to the booksellers, in advertising for them; and to their customers, in making books useless; with all the learning, reason, and wit, more than are proper for one advertisement."

Amid these eccentricities it is remarkable, that "the Zany" never forsook his studies; and the amazing multiplicity of the MSS. he left behind him, confirm this extraordinary fact. "These," he says, "are six thousand more or less, that I value at one guinea apiece; with 150 volumes of common places of wit, memoranda," &c. They were sold for much less than one hundred pounds; I have looked over many; they are written with great care. Every leaf has an opposite blank page, probably left for additions or corrections, so that if his nonsense were spontaneous, his sense was the fruit of study and correction.

Such was "Orator Henley!" A scholar of great acquirements, and of no mean genius; hardy and inventive, eloquent and witty; he might have been an ornament to literature, which he made ridiculous; and the pride of the pulpit, which he so egregiously disgraced; but, having blunted and worn out that interior feeling, which is the instinct of the good man, and the wisdom of the wise, there was no balance in his passions, and the decorum of life was sacrificed to its selfishness. He condescended to live on the follies of the people, and his sordid nature had changed him till he crept, "licking the dust with the serpent."

THE MALADIES OF AUTHORS.

The practice of every art subjects the artist to some particular inconvenience, usually inflicting some malady on that member which has been over-wrought by excess: nature abused, pursues man into his most secret corners, and avenges herself. In the athletic exercises of the ancient Gymnasium, the pugilists were observed to become lean from their hips downwards, while the superior parts of their bodies, which they over-exercised, were prodigiously swollen; on the contrary, the racers were meagre upwards, while their feet acquired an unnatural dimension. The secret source of life seems to be carried forwards to those parts which are making the most continued efforts.

In all sedentary labours, some particular malady is contracted by every worker, derived from particular postures of the body and peculiar habits. Thus the weaver, the tailor, the painter, and the glass-blower, have all their respective maladies. The diamond-cutter, with a furnace before him, may be said almost to live in one; the slightest air must be shut out of the apartment, lest it scatter away the precious dust—a breath would ruin him!

The analogy is obvious*; and the author must participate in the common fate of all sedentary occupations. But his maladies, from the very nature of the delicate organ of thinking, intensely exercised, are more terrible than those of any

* Hawkesworth, in the second paper of the Adventurer, has composed, from his own feelings, an elegant description of intellectual and corporeal labour, and the sufferings of an author, with the uncertainty of his labour and his reward.

other profession; they are more complicated, more hidden in their causes, and the mysterious union and secret influence of the faculties of the soul over those of the body, are visible, yet still incomprehensible; they frequently produce a perturbation in the faculties, a state of acute irritability, and many sorrows and infirmities, which are not likely to create much sympathy from those around the author, who, at a glance, could have discovered where the pugilist or the racer became meagre or monstrous: the intellectual malady eludes even the tenderness of friendship.

The more obvious maladies engendered by the life of a student arise from over-study. These have furnished a curious volume to Tissot, in his treatise "On the Health of Men of Letters;" a book, however, which chills and terrifies more than it does good.

The unnatural fixed postures, the perpetual activity of the mind, and the inaction of the body; the brain exhausted with assiduous toil deranging the nerves, vitiating the digestive powers, disordering its own machinery, and breaking the calm of sleep by that previous state of excitement which study throws us into, are some of the calamities of a studious life: for like the ocean, when its swell is subsiding, the waves of the mind too still heave and beat; hence all the small feverish symptoms, and the whole train of hypochondriac affections, as well as some acute ones *.

Among the correspondents of the poets Hughes and Thomson, there is a pathetic letter from a student. Alexander Bayne, to prepare his lectures, studied fourteen hours a day for eight months successively, and wrote 1600 sheets. Such intense application, which, however, not greatly exceeds that of many authors, brought on the bodily complaints he has minutely described, with "all the dispiriting symptoms of a nervous illness, commonly called vapours, or lowness of spirits." Bayne, who was of an athletic temperament, imagined he had not paid attention to his diet, to the lowness of his desk, and his habit of sitting with a particular compression of the body;—in future, all these were to be avoided. He prolonged his life for five years; and, perhaps, was still flattering his hopes with sharing, one day, in the literary celebrity of his friends, when, to use his words, "the same illness made a fierce attack upon me again, and has kept me in a very bad state of inactivity and disrelish of all my ordinary amusements:" those *amusements* were his serious *studies*. There is a fascination in literary labour: the student feeds on magical drugs; to withdraw him from them requires nothing less than that greater magic, which could break his own spells. A few months after this letter was written, Bayne died on the way to Bath, a martyr to his studies.

The excessive labour on a voluminous work, which occupies a long life, leaves the student with a broken constitution, and his sight decayed or lost. The most admirable observer of mankind, and the truest painter of the human heart, declares, "The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle weigheth down the *mind that museth on many things*." Of this class was old Randle Cotgrave, the curious collector of the most copious dictionary of old French and old English words and phrases. The work is the only treasury of our genuine idiom. Even this labour of the lexicographer, so copious and so elaborate, must have been projected with rapture, and pursued with pleasure, till, in the progress, "the mind was musing on many things."

* Dr. Fuller's "Medicina Gymnastica, or, a treatise concerning the power of Exercise, with respect to the Animal Œconomy, fifth edition, 1718," is useful to remind the student of what he is apt to forget; for the object of this volume is to *substitute exercise for medicine*. He wrote the book before he became a physician. He considers horse-riding as the best and noblest of all exercises, it being "a mixt exercise, partly active and partly passive, while other sorts, such as walking, running, stooping, or the like, require some labour and more strength for their performance." Cheyne, in his well-known treatise of "The English Malady," published about twenty years after Fuller's work, acknowledges that riding on horseback is the best of all exercises, for which he details his reasons. "Walking," he says, "though it will answer the same end, yet is it more laborious and tiresome;" but amusement ought always to be combined with the exercise of a student; the mind will receive no refreshment by a solitary walk or ride, unless it be agreeably withdrawn from all thoughtfulness and anxiety; if it continue studying in its recreations, it is the sure means of obtaining neither of its objects—a friend, not an author, will at such a moment be the better companion.

The last chapter in Fuller's work contains much curious reading on the ancient physicians, and their gymnastic courses, which Asclepiades, the pleasantest of all the ancient physicians, greatly studied; he was most fortunate in the invention of exercises to supply the place of much physic, and (says Fuller) no man in any age ever had the happiness to obtain so general an applause; Pliny calls him the delight of mankind. Admirable physician, who had so many ways, it appears, to make physic agreeable! He invented the *lecti pensiles*, or hanging beds, that the sick might be rocked to sleep; which took so much at that time, that they became a great luxury among the Romans.

Fuller judiciously does not recommend the gymnastic courses, because horse-riding, for persons of delicate constitutions, is preferable; he discovers too the reason why the ancients did not introduce this mode of exercise—it arose from the simple circumstance of their not knowing the use of stirrups, which was a later invention. Riding with the ancients was, therefore, only an exercise for the healthy and the robust; a horse without stirrups was a formidable animal for a valetudinarian.

Then came the melancholy doubt, that drops mildew from its enveloping wings over the voluminous labour of a laborious author, whether he be wisely consuming his days, and not perpetually neglecting some higher duties, or some happier amusements. Still the enchanted delver sighs, and strikes on, in the glimmering mine of hope. If he live to complete the great labour, it is, perhaps, reserved for the applause of the next age; for, as our great lexicographer exclaimed, "In this gloom of solitude I have protracted my work, till those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds;" but, if it be applauded in his own, that praise has come too late for him whose literary labour has stolen away his sight. Cotgrave had grown blind over his dictionary, and was doubtful whether this work of his laborious days and nightly vigils was not a superfluous labour, and nothing, after all, but a "poor bundle of words." The reader may listen to the gray-headed martyr, addressing his patron, Lord Burghley:

"I present to your lordship an account of the *expense of many hours*, which, in your service, and to mine own benefit, *might have been otherwise employed*. My desires have aimed at more substantial marks; but *mine eyes* failed them, and forced me to *spend out their vigour in this bundle of words*, which may be unworthy of your lordship's great patience, and, perhaps, *ill-suited to the expectation of others*."

A great number of young authors have died of over-study. An intellectual enthusiasm, accompanied by constitutional delicacy, has swept away half the rising genius of the age. Curious calculators have affected to discover the average number of infants who die under the age of five years: had they investigated those of the children of genius who perish before their thirtieth year, we should not be less amazed at this waste of man. There are few scenes more afflicting, nor which more deeply engage our sympathy, than that of a youth, glowing with the devotion of study, and resolute to distinguish his name among his countrymen, while death is stealing on him, touching with premature age, before he strikes the last blow. The author perishes on the very pages which give a charm to his existence. The fine taste and tender melancholy of Headley, the fervid genius of Henry Kirke White, will not easily pass away; but how many youths as noble-minded have not had the fortune of Kirke White to be commemorated by genius, and have perished without their fame! Henry Wharton is a name well known to the student of English literature; he published historical criticisms of high value; and be left, as some of the fruits of his studies, sixteen volumes of MSS., preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth. These great labours were pursued with the ardour that only could have produced them; the author had not exceeded his thirtieth year, when he sank under his continued studies, and perished a martyr to literature. Our literary history abounds with instances of the sad effects of an over-indulgence in study: that agreeable writer, Howel, had nearly lost his life by an excess of this nature, studying through long nights in the depth of winter. This severe study occasioned an imposthume in his head; he was eighteen days without sleep; and the illness was attended with many other afflicting symptoms. The eager diligence of Blackmore, protracting his studies through the night, broke his health, and obliged him to fly to a country retreat. Harris, the historian, died of a consumption by midnight studies, as his friend Hollis mentions. I shall add a recent instance, which I myself witnessed: it is that of John Macdiarmid. He was one of those Scotch students whom the golden fame of Hume and Robertson attracted to the metropolis. He mounted the first steps of literary adventure with credit; and passed through the probation of editor and reviewer, till he strove for more heroic adventures. He published some volumes, whose subjects display the aspirings of his genius: "An Inquiry into the Nature of Civil and Military Subordination;" another into "the System of Military Defence." It was during these labours I beheld this inquirer, of a tender frame, emaciated, and study-worn, with hollow eyes, where the mind dimly shone like a lamp in a tomb. With keen ardour he opened a new plan of biographical politics. When, by one who wished the author was in better condition, the dangers of excess in study were brought to his recollection, he smiled, and, with something of a mysterious air, talked of unalterable confidence in the powers of his mind; of the indefinite improvement in our faculties; and, with this enfeebled frame, considered himself capable of continuous labour. His whole life, indeed, was one melancholy trial. Often the day cheerfully passed without its meal, but never without its page. The new system of political biography was advancing, when our young author felt a paralytic stroke. He afterwards resumed his pen; and a second one proved fatal. He lived just to pass through the press his "Lives of British Statesmen," a splendid quarto, whose publication he owed to the generous temper of a friend, who, when the author could not readily procure a publisher, would not see the dying author's last hope disappointed. Some research and reflection are combined in this literary and civil history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but it was written with the blood

of the author, for Macdiarmid died of over-study and exhaustion.

Among the maladies of poor authors, who procure a precarious existence by their pen, one, not the least considerable, is their old age; their flower and maturity of life were shed for no human comforts; and old age is the withered root. The late THOMAS MORTIMER, the compiler, among other things, of that useful work, "The Student's Pocket Dictionary," felt this severely—he himself experienced no abatement of his ardour, nor deficiency in his intellectual powers, at near the age of eighty;—but he then would complain "of the paucity of literary employment, and the preference given to young adventurers." Such is the *youth*, and such the *old age* of ordinary authors!

LITERARY SCOTCHMEN.

WHAT literary emigrations from the North, of young men of genius, seduced by a romantic passion for literary fame, and lured by the golden prospects which the happier genius of some of their own countrymen opened on them! A volume might be written on literary Scotchmen, who have perished immaturely in this metropolis; little known, and slightly connected, they have dropped away among us, and scarcely left a vestige in the wrecks of their genius. Among them some authors may be discovered who might have ranked, perhaps, in the first classes of our literature. I shall select four out of as many hundred, who were not entirely unknown to me; a romantic youth—a man of genius—a brilliant prose writer—and a labourer in literature.

ISAAC RITSON (not the poetical antiquary) was a young man of genius, who perished immaturely in this metropolis by attempting to exist by the efforts of his pen.

In early youth he roved among his native mountains, with the battles of Homer in his head, and his bow and arrow in his hand; in calmer hours, he nearly completed a spirited version of Hesiod, which constantly occupied his after-studies; yet our minstrel-archer did not less love the severer sciences.

Selected at length to rise to the eminent station of the Village Schoolmaster,—from the thankless office of pouring cold rudiments into heedless ears RITSON took a poetical flight. It was among the mountains and wild scenery of Scotland, that our young Homer, picking up fragments of heroic songs, and composing some fine ballad poetry, would, in his wanderings, recite them with such passionate expression, that he never failed of auditors; and found even the poor generous, when their better passions were moved. Thus he lived, like some old troubadour, by his rhymes, and his chants, and his virelays; and, after a year's absence, our bard returned in the triumph of verse. This was the most seducing moment of life; RITSON felt himself a laureated Petrarch; but he had now quitted his untutored but feeling admirers; and the child of fancy was to mix with the everyday business of life.

At Edinburgh he studied medicine, lived by writing theses for the idle and the incompetent, and composed a poem on Medicine, till at length his hopes and his ambition conducted him to London. But the golden age of the imagination soon deserted him in his obscure apartment in the glittering metropolis. He attended the hospitals, but these were crowded by students who, if they relished the science less, loved the trade more: he published a hasty version of Homer's Hymn to Venus, which was good enough to be praised, but not to sell; at length his fertile imagination withering over the task-work of literature, he resigned fame for bread; wrote the preface to Clarke's Survey of the Lakes, compiled medical articles for the Monthly Review; and, wasting fast his ebbing spirits, he retreated to an obscure lodging at Islington, where death relieved a hopeless author, in the twenty-seventh year of his life.

The following unpolished lines were struck off at a heat in trying his pen on the back of a letter; he wrote the names of the Sister Fates, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos—the sudden recollection of his own fate rushed on him—and thus the rhapsodist broke out:

"I wonder much, as yet ye're spinning, Fates!
What threads yet twisted out for me, old jades!
Ah, Atropos! perhaps for me thou spinn'st
Neglect, contempt, and penury and woe;
Be't so; whilst that foul fiend, the spleen,
And moping melancholy spare me, all the rest
I'll bear, as should a man; 'twill do me good,
And teach me what no better fortune could,
Humility, and sympathy with others' ills.
——————— Ye destinies,
I love you much; ye flatter not my pride.
Your mien, 'tis true, is wrinkled, hard, and sour;
Your words are harsh and stern; and sterner still
Your purposes to me. Yet I forgive
Whatever you have done, or mean to do.
Beneath some baleful planet born, I've found,
In all this world, no friend with fostering hand
To lead me on to science, which I love
Beyond all else the world could give; yet still
Your rigour I forgive; ye are not yet my foes;
My own untutor'd will's my only curse.
We grasp asphaltic apples; blooming poison!
We love what we should hate; how kind, ye Fates,
To thwart our wishes! O you're kind to scourge!
And flay us to the bone to make us feel!"—

Thus deeply he enters into his own feelings, and abjures his errors, as he paints the utter

desolation of the soul while falling into the grave opening at his feet.

The town was once amused almost every morning by a series of humorous or burlesque poems by a writer under the assumed name of *Matthew Bramble*—he was at that very moment one of the most moving spectacles of human melancholy I have ever witnessed.

It was one evening I saw a tall, famished, melancholy man enter a bookseller's shop, his hat flapped over his eyes, and his whole frame evidently feeble from exhaustion and utter misery. The bookseller inquired how he proceeded in his new tragedy. "Do not talk to me about my tragedy! Do not talk to me about my tragedy! I have indeed more tragedy than I can bear at home!" was the reply, and the voice faltered as he spoke. This man was Matthew Bramble, or rather —M'Donald, the author of the tragedy of Vimonda, at that moment the writer of comic poetry —his tragedy was indeed a domestic one, in which he himself was the greatest actor amid his disconsolate family; he shortly afterwards perished. M'Donald had walked from Scotland with no other fortune than the novel of "The Independent" in one pocket, and the tragedy of "Vimonda" in the other. Yet he lived some time in all the bloom and flush of poetical confidence. Vimonda was even performed several nights, but not with the success the romantic poet, among his native rocks, had conceived was to crown his anxious labours—the theatre disappointed him—and afterwards, to his feelings, all the world!

Logan had the dispositions of a poetic spirit, not cast in a common mould; with fancy he combined learning, and with eloquence philosophy.

His claims on our sympathy arise from those circumstances in his life which open the secret sources of the calamities of authors; of those minds of finer temper, who, having tamed the heat of their youth by the patient severity of study, from causes not always difficult to discover, find their favourite objects and their fondest hopes barren and neglected. It is then that the thoughtful melancholy, which constitutes so large a portion of their genius, absorbs and consumes the very faculties to which it gave birth.

Logan studied at the University of Edinburgh, was ordained in the church of Scotland—and early distinguished as a poet by the simplicity and the tenderness of his verses, yet the philosophy of history had as deeply interested his studies. He gave two courses of lectures. I have heard from his pupils their admiration, after the lapse of many years; so striking were those lectures for having successfully applied the science of moral philosophy to the history of nations. All wished that Logan should obtain the chair of the Professor of Universal History—but from some point of etiquette he failed in obtaining that distinguished office.

This was his first disappointment in life, yet then perhaps but lightly felt; for the public had approved of his poems, and a successful poet is easily consoled. Poetry to such a gentle being seems a universal specific for all the evils of life; it acts at the moment, exhausting and destroying too often the constitution it seems to restore.

He had finished the tragedy of "Runnymede;" it was accepted at Covent-garden, but interdicted by the Lord Chamberlain, from some suspicion that its lofty sentiments contained allusions to the politics of the day. The Barons-in-arms who met John, were conceived to be deeper politicians than the poet himself was aware of. This was the second disappointment in the life of this man of genius.

The third calamity was the natural consequence of a tragic poet being also a Scotch clergyman. Logan had inflicted a wound on the Presbytery, heirs of the genius of old Prynne, whose puritanic fanaticism had never forgiven Home for his "Douglas," and now groaned to detect genius still lurking among them. Logan, it is certain, expressed his contempt for them; they their hatred of him: folly and pride in a poet, to beard Presbyters in a land of Presbyterians!

He gladly abandoned them, retiring on a small annuity. They had, however, hurt his temper—they had irritated the nervous system of a man too susceptible of all impressions, gentle or unkind—his character had all those unequal habitudes which genius contracts in its boldness and its tremors; he was now vivacious and indignant, and now fretted and melancholy. He flew to the metropolis, occupied himself in literature, and was a frequent contributor to the "English Review." He published "A Review of the Principal Charges against Mr. Hastings." Logan wrestled with the genius of Burke and Sheridan; the House of Commons ordered the publisher Stockdale to be prosecuted, but the author did not live to rejoice in the victory obtained by his genius.

This elegant philosopher has impressed on all his works the seal of genius; and his posthumous compositions became even popular; he who had with difficulty escaped excommunication by Presbyters, left the world after his death two volumes of sermons, which breathe all that piety, morality, and eloquence admire. His unrevised lectures, published under the name of a person, one Rutherford, who had purchased the MS., were given to the world in "A View of Ancient History." But one highly-finished composition he had himself published; it is a philosophical review of Despotism: had the name of Gibbon been affixed

to the title-page, its authenticity had not been suspected *.

From one of his executors, Dr. Donald Grant, who wrote the life prefixed to his poems, I heard of the state of his numerous MSS.; the scattered yet warm embers of the unhappy bard. Several tragedies, and one on Mary Queen of Scots, abounding with all that domestic tenderness and poetic sensibility which formed the soft and natural feature of his muse; these, with minor poems, thirty lectures on the Roman History, and portions of a periodical paper, were the wrecks of genius! He resided here, little known out of a very private circle, and perished in his fortieth year, not of penury, but of a broken heart. Such noble and well-founded expectations of fortune and fame, all the plans of literary ambition overturned, his genius, with all its delicacy, its spirit, and its elegance, became a prey to that melancholy which constituted so large a portion of it.

Logan, in his "Ode to a Man of Letters," had formed this lofty conception of a great author:—

"Won from neglected wastes of time,
Apollo hails his fairest clime,
The provinces of mind;
An Egypt with eternal towers †;
See Montesquieu redeem the hours
From Louis to mankind.

No tame remission genius knows,
No interval of dark repose,
To quench the ethereal flame;
From Thebes to Troy, the victor hies,
And Homer with his hero vies,
In varied paths to Fame."

Our children will long repeat his "Ode to the Cuckoo," one of the most lovely poems in our language; magical stanzas of picture, melody, and sentiment.

These authors were undoubtedly men of finer feelings, who all perished immaturely, victims in the higher department of literature! But this article would not be complete without furnishing the reader with a picture of the fate of one, who, with a pertinacity of industry not common, having undergone regular studies, not very injudiciously deemed that the life of a man of letters could provide for the simple wants of a philosopher.

This man was the late Robert Heron, who, in the following letter, transcribed from the original, stated his history to the Literary Fund. It was written in a moment of extreme bodily suffering and mental agony. In the house to which he had been hurried for debt—at such a moment, he found eloquence in a narrative, pathetic from its simplicity, and valuable for its genuineness, as giving the results of a life of literary industry, productive of great infelicity and disgrace; one would imagine that the author had been a criminal rather than a man of letters.

"*The Case of a Man of Letters, of regular education, living by honest literary industry.*

"Ever since I was eleven years of age I have mingled with my studies the labour of teaching or of writing, to support and educate myself.

"During about twenty years, while I was in constant or occasional attendance at the University of Edinburgh, I taught and assisted young persons, at all periods, in the course of education; from the Alphabet to the highest branches of Science and Literature.

"I read a course of Lectures on the Law of Nature, the Law of Nations, the Jewish, the Grecian, the Roman, and the Canon Law, and then on the Feudal Law; and on the several forms of Municipal Jurisprudence established in Modern Europe. I printed a Syllabus of these Lectures, which was approved. They were intended as introductory to the professional study of Law, and to assist gentlemen who did not study it professionally, in the understanding of History.

"I translated Fourcroy's Chemistry twice, from both the second and the third editions of the original; Fourcroy's Philosophy of Chemistry; Savary's Travels in Greece; Dumourier's Letters; Gessner's Idylls in part; an abstract of Zimmerman on Solitude, and a great diversity of smaller pieces.

"I wrote a Journey through the Western Parts of Scotland, which has passed through two editions; a History of Scotland in six volumes 8vo; a Topographical Account of Scotland, which has been several times reprinted; a number of communications in the Edinburgh Magazine; many Prefaces and Critiques; a Memoir of the life of Burns the Poet, which suggested and promoted the subscription for his family; has been many times reprinted, and formed the basis of Dr. Currie's Life of him, as I learned by a letter from the Doctor to one of his friends; a variety of *Jeux d'Esprit* in verse and prose; and many abridgments of large works.

"In the beginning of 1799 I was encouraged to come to London. Here I have written a great multiplicity of articles in almost every branch of science and literature; my education at

* This admirable little work is entitled, "A Dissertation on the Governments, Manners, and Spirit of Asia; Murray, 1787." It is anonymous; but the publisher informed me it was written by Logan. His "Elements of the Philosophy of History" are valuable. His "Sermons" have been republished.

† The finest provinces of Egypt gained from a neglected waste.

Edinburgh having comprehended them all. The London Review, the Agricultural Magazine, the Anti-jacobin Review, the Monthly Magazine, the Universal Magazine, the Public Characters, the Annual Necrology, with several other periodical works, contain many of my communications. In such of those publications as have been reviewed, I can show that my anonymous pieces have been distinguished with very high praise. I have written also a short system of Chemistry in one volume 8vo; and I published a few weeks since a small work called "Comforts of Life*," of which the first edition was sold in one week, and the second edition is now in rapid sale.

"In the Newspapers—the Oracle, the Porcupine when it existed, the General Evening Post, the Morning Post, the British Press, the Courier, &c., I have published many Reports of Debates in Parliament, and, I believe, a greater variety of light fugitive pieces than I know to have been written by any one other person.

"I have written also a variety of compositions in the Latin and the French languages, in favour of which I have been honoured with the testimonies of liberal approbation.

"I have invariably written to serve the cause of religion, morality, pious christian education, and good order, in the most direct manner. I have considered what I have written as mere trifles; and have incessantly studied to qualify myself for something better. I can prove that I have, for many years, read and written, one day with another, from twelve to sixteen hours a day. As a human being, I have not been free from follies and errors. But the tenor of my life has been temperate, laborious, humble, quiet, and, to the utmost of my power, beneficent. I can prove the general tenor of my writings to have been candid, and ever adapted to exhibit the most favourable views of the abilities, dispositions, and exertions of others.

"For these last ten months I have been brought to the very extremity of bodily and pecuniary distress.

"I shudder at the thought of perishing in a jail.

"92 *Chancery-lane*,
"*Feb.* 2, 1807. (In confinement.)"

The physicians reported that Robert Heron's health was such "as rendered him totally incapable of extricating himself from the difficulties in which he was involved, by the *indiscreet exertion of his mind, in protracted and incessant literary labours.*"

About three months after, Heron sunk under a fever, and perished amid the walls of Newgate. We are disgusted with this horrid state of pauperism; we are indignant at beholding an author, not a contemptible one, in this last stage of human wretchedness! after early and late studies, after having read and written from twelve to sixteen hours a day!—O, ye populace of scribblers! before ye are driven to a garret, and your eyes are filled with constant tears, pause—recollect that few of you possess the learning or the abilities of Heron.

The fate of Heron—is the fate of hundreds of authors by profession in the present day; of men of some literary talent, who can never extricate themselves from a degrading state of poverty.

* "The Comforts of Life" were written in prison; "The Miseries" necessarily in a drawing-room. The works of authors are often in contrast with themselves; melancholy authors are the most jocular, and the most humorous the most melancholy.

LABORIOUS AUTHORS.

THIS is one of the groans of old BURTON over his laborious work, when he is anticipating the reception it is like to meet with, and personates his objectors:—He says,

"This is a thinge of meere industrie; a collection without wit or ihvention; a very toy!—So men are valued! their labours vilified by fellowes of no worth themselves, as things of nought; who could not have done as much?"

There is, indeed, a class of authors who are liable to forfeit all claims to genius, whatever their genius may be—these are the laborious writers of voluminous works; but they are farther subject to heavier grievances, to be undervalued or neglected by the apathy or the ingratitude of the public.

Industry is often conceived to betray the absence of intellectual exertion, and the magnitude of a work is imagined necessarily to shut out all genius. Yet a laborious work has often had an original growth and raciness in it, requiring a genius whose peculiar feeling, like invisible vitality, is spread through the mighty body. Feeble imitations of such laborious works have proved the master's mind that is in the original. There is a talent in industry, which every industrious man does not possess; and even taste and imagination may lead to the deepest studies of antiquities, as well as mere undiscerning curiosity and plodding dulness.

But there are other more striking characteristics of intellectual feeling in authors of this class. The fortitude of mind which enables them to complete labours of which, in many instances, they are conscious that the real value will only be appreciated by dispassionate posterity, themselves rarely

living to witness the fame of their own work established; while they endure the captiousness of malicious cavillers. It is said that the Optics of NEWTON had no character or credit here till noticed in France. It would not be the only instance of an author writing above his own age, and anticipating its more advanced genius. How many works of erudition might be adduced to show their authors' disappointments! PRIDEAUX's learned work of the "Connexion of the Old and New Testament," and SHUCKFORD's similar one, were both a long while before they could obtain a publisher, and much longer before they found readers. It is said Sir WALTER RALEIGH burned the second volume of his History from the ill success the first had met with. PRINCE's "Worthies of Devon" was so unfavourably received by the public, that the laborious and patriotic author was so discouraged as not to print the second volume, which is said to have been prepared for the press.—FARNEWORTH's elaborate Translation, with notes and dissertations, of Machiavel's Works, was hawked about the town; and the poor author discovered that he understood Machiavel better than the public. After other labours of this kind, he left his family in distressed circumstances.—Observe, this excellent book now bears a high price!—The fate of the "Biographia Britannica," in its first edition, must be noticed: the spirit and acuteness of CAMPBELL, the curious industry of OLDYS, and the united labours of very able writers, could not secure public favour; this treasure of our literary history was on the point of being suspended, when a poem by Gilbert West drew the public attention to that elaborate work, which, however, still languished, and was hastily concluded.—GRANGER says of his admirable work, in one of his letters, "On a fair state of my account, it would appear that my labours in the improvement of my work do not amount to *half the pay of a scavenger!*" He received only one hundred pounds to the times of Charles I., and the rest to depend on public favour for the continuation. The sale was sluggish; even Walpole seemed doubtful of its success, though he probably secretly envied the skill of our portrait-painter. It was too philosophical for the mere collector, and it took near ten years before it reached the hands of philosophers; the author derived little profit, and never lived to see its popularity established! We have had many highly valuable works suspended for their want of public patronage, to the utter disappointment, and sometimes the ruin of their authors; such are OLDYS's "British Librarian," MORGAN's "Phœnix Britannicus," Dr. BERKENHOUT's "Biographia Literaria," Professor MARTYN's and Dr. LETTICE's "Antiquities of Herculaneum:" all these are *first* volumes, there are no *seconds!* They are now rare, curious, and high priced! Ungrateful public! Unhappy authors!

That noble enthusiasm which so strongly characterises genius, in productions whose originality is of a less ambiguous nature, has been experienced by some of these laborious authors, who have sacrificed their lives and fortunes to their beloved studies. The enthusiasm of literature has often been that of heroism, and many have not shrunk from the forlorn hope.

RUSHWORTH and RYMER, to whose collections our history stands so deeply indebted, must have strongly felt this literary ardour, for they passed their lives in forming them; till Rymer, in the utmost distress, was obliged to sell his books and his fifty volumes of MSS. which he could not get printed; and Rushworth died in the King's Bench, of a broken heart; many of his papers still remain unpublished. His ruling passion was amassing state matters, and he voluntarily neglected great opportunities of acquiring a large fortune for this entire devotion of his life. The same fate has awaited the similar labours of many authors to whom the history of our country lies under deep obligations. ARTHUR COLLINS, the historiographer of our Peerage, and the curious collector of the valuable "Sydney papers," and other collections, passed his life in rescuing these wrecks of antiquity, in giving authenticity to our history, or contributing fresh materials to it; but his midnight vigils were cheered by no patronage, nor his labours valued, till the eye that pored on the mutilated MS. was for ever closed. Of all those curious works of the late Mr. STRUTT, which are now bearing such high prices, all were produced by extensive reading, and illustrated by his own drawings, from the manuscripts of different epochs in our history. What was the result to that ingenious artist and author, who, under the plain simplicity of an antiquary, concealed a fine poetical mind, and an enthusiasm for his beloved pursuits to which only we are indebted for them? Strutt, living in the greatest obscurity, and voluntarily sacrificing all the ordinary views of life, and the trade of his *burin*, solely attached to national antiquities, and charmed by calling them into a fresh existence under his pencil, I have witnessed at the British Museum, forgetting for whole days his miseries, in sedulous research and delightful labour; at times even doubtful whether he could get his works printed; for some of which he was not regaled even with the Roman supper of "a radish and an egg." How he left his domestic affairs, his son can tell; how his works have tripled their value, the booksellers. In writing on the Calamities attending the love of literary labour, Mr. JOHN NICHOLS, the modest annalist of the literary history of the last century, and the friend

of half the departed genius of our country, cannot but occur to me. He zealously published more than fifty works, illustrating the literature and the antiquities of the country; labours not given to the world without great sacrifices. Bishop Hurd, with friendly solicitude, writes to Mr. Nichols on some of his own publications, "While you are enriching the Antiquarian world" (and, by the Life of Bowyer, may be added the Literary), "I hope you do not forget yourself. *The profession of an author, I know from experience, is not a lucrative one.*—I only mention this because I see a large catalogue of your publications." At another time the Bishop writes, "You are very good to excuse my freedom with you; but, as times go, almost any trade is better than that of an author," &c. On these notes Mr. Nichols confesses, "I have had some occasion to regret that I did not attend to the judicious suggestions." We owe to the late THOMAS DAVIES, the author of "Garrick's Life," and other literary works, beautiful editions of some of our elder poets, which are now eagerly sought after, yet, though all his publications were of the best kinds, and are now of increasing value, the taste of Tom Davies twice ended in bankruptcy. It is to be lamented for the cause of literature, that even a bookseller may have too refined a taste for his trade; it must always be his interest to float on the current of public taste, whatever that may be; should he have an ambition to *create* it, he will be anticipating a more cultivated curiosity by half a century; thus the business of a bookseller rarely accords with the design of advancing our literature.

The works of literature, it is then but too evident, receive no equivalent; let this be recollected by him who would draw his existence from them. A young writer often resembles that imaginary author whom Johnson, in a humorous letter in the Idler (No. 55), represents as having composed a work "of universal curiosity, computed that it would call for many editions of his book, and that in five years he should gain fifteen thousand pounds by the sale of thirty thousand copies." There are, indeed, some who have been dazzled by the good fortune of GIBBON, ROBERTSON, and HUME; we are to consider these favourites, not merely as authors, but as possessing, by their situation in life, a certain independence which preserved them from the vexations of the authors I have noticed. Observe, however, that the uncommon sum Gibbon received for copyright, though it excited the astonishment of the philosopher himself, was for the continued labour of a *whole life*, and probably the *library* he had purchased for his work equalled at least in cost the produce of his *pen*; the tools cost the workman as much as he obtained for his work. Six thousand pounds gained on these terms will keep an author indigent!

Many great labours have been designed by their authors, even to be posthumous, prompted only by their love of study, and a patriotic zeal. Bishop KENNETT's stupendous "Register and Chronicle," volume I., is one of those astonishing labours, which could only have been produced by the pleasure of study urged by the strong love of posterity. It is a diary in which the bishop, one of our most studious and active authors, has recorded every matter of fact, "delivered in the words of the most authentic books, papers, and records." The design was to preserve our literary history from the Restoration. This silent labour he had been pursuing all his life, and published the first volume in his sixty-eighth year, the very year he died. But he was so sensible of the coyness of the public taste for what he calls in a letter to a literary friend, "a tedious heavy book," that he gave it away to the publisher. "The volume, too large, brings me no profit. In good truth, the scheme was laid for conscience' sake, to restore a good old principle that history should be purely matter of fact, that every reader, by examining and comparing, may make out a history by his own judgment. I have collections transcribed for another volume, if the bookseller will run the hazard of printing." This volume has never appeared, and the bookseller probably lost a considerable sum by the one published, which valuable volume is now procured with difficulty*.

These laborious authors have commenced their literary life with a glowing ardour, though the feelings of genius have been obstructed by those numerous causes which occur too frequently in the life of a literary man.

Let us listen to STRUTT, whom we have just noticed, and let us learn what he proposed doing, in the first age of fancy.

Having obtained the first gold medal ever given at the Royal Academy, he writes to his mother, and thus thanks her and his friends for their deep interest in his success:—

"I will at least strive to the utmost, to give my benefactors no reason to think their pains thrown away. If I should not be able to abound in riches, yet, by God's help, I will strive to pluck that palm which the greatest artists of foregoing ages have done before me; *I will strive to leave my name behind me in the world, if not in the splendour that some have, at least with* some marks *of assiduity and study;* which, I can assure you, shall never be wanting in me. Who can bear to hear the names of Raphael, Titian, Michael Angelo,

* See Bishop Kennet's letter in Nichols's "Life of Bowyer," vol. i. p. 383.

&c., the most famous of the Italian masters, in the mouth of every one, and not wish to be like them? And to be like them, we must study as they have done, take such pains, and labour continually like them; the which shall not be wanting on my side, I dare affirm; so that, should I not succeed, I may rest contented, and say I have done my utmost. God has blessed me with a mind to undertake. You, dear madam, will excuse my vanity; you know me, from my childish days, to have been a vain boy, always desirous to execute something to gain me praises from every one; always scheming and imitating whatever I saw done by anybody."

And when Strutt settled in the metropolis, and studied at the British Museum, amid all the stores of knowledge and art, his imagination delighted to expatiate in its future prospects. In a letter to a friend he has thus chronicled his feelings:

"I would not only be a great antiquary, but a refined thinker; I would not only discover antiquities, but would, by explaining their use, render them useful. Such vast funds of knowledge lie hid in the antiquated remains of the earlier ages; these I would bring forth, and set in their true light."

Poor Strutt, at the close of life, was returning to his own first and natural energies, in producing a work of the imagination. He had made considerable progress in one, and the early parts which he had finished bear the stamp of genius; it is entitled "Queenhoo-hall, a Romance of ancient times," full of the picturesque manners and costume, and characters of the age, in which he was so conversant; with many lyrical pieces, which often are full of poetic feeling—but he was called off from the work to prepare a more laborious one. "Queenhoo-hall" remained a heap of fragments at his death; except the first volume, and was filled up by a stranger hand. The stranger was Sir Walter Scott, and "Queenhoo-hall" was the origin of that glorious series of romances where antiquarianism has taken the shape of imagination.

Writing on the calamities attached to literature, I must notice one of a more recondite nature, yet perhaps few literary agonies are more keenly felt. I would not excite an undue sympathy for a class of writers who are usually considered as drudges; but the present case claims our sympathy.

There are men of letters, who, early in life, have formed some favourite plan of literary labour, which they have unremittingly pursued, till, sometimes near the close of life, they either discover their inability to terminate it, or begin to depreciate their own constant labour. The literary architect has grown grey over his edifice; and, as if the black wand of enchantment had waved over it, the colonnades become interminable, the pillars seem to want a foundation, and all the rich materials he had collected together, lie before him in all the disorder of ruins. It may be urged that the reward of literary labour, like the consolations of virtue, must be drawn with all their sweetness from itself; or, that if the author be incompetent, he must pay the price of his incapacity. This may be Stoicism, but it is not humanity. The truth is, there is always a latent love of fame, that prompts to this strong devotion of labour; and he who has given a long life to that which he has so much desired, and can never enjoy, might well be excused receiving our insults, if he cannot extort our pity.

A remarkable instance occurs in the fate of the late Rev. William Cole; he was the college friend of Walpole, Mason, and Gray; a striking proof how dissimilar habits and opposite tastes and feelings can associate in literary friendship; for Cole, indeed, the public had informed him that his friends were poets and men of wit; and for them, Cole's patient and curious turn was useful, and, by its extravagant trifling, must have been very amusing. He had a gossip's ear, and a tatler's pen—and, among better things, wrote down every grain of literary scandal his insatiable and minute curiosity could lick up; as patient and voracious as an ant-eater, he stretched out his tongue till it was covered by the tiny creatures, and drew them all in at one digestion. All these tales were registered with the utmost simplicity, as the reporter received them; but, being but tales, the exactness of his truth made them still more dangerous lies, by being perpetuated; in his reflections he spared neither friend nor foe; yet, still anxious after truth, and usually telling lies, it is very amusing to observe, that, as he proceeds, he very laudably contradicts or explains away in subsequent memoranda what he had before registered. Walpole, in a correspondence of forty years, he was perpetually flattering, though he must imperfectly have relished his fine taste, while he abhorred his more liberal principles to which sometimes he addressed a submissive remonstrance. He has at times written a letter coolly, and, at the same moment, chronicled his suppressed feelings in his diary, with all the flame and sputter of his strong prejudices. He was expressively nick-named Cardinal Cole. These scandalous chronicles, which only show the violence of his prejudices, without the force of genius, or the acuteness of penetration, were ordered not to be opened till twenty years after his decease; he wished to do as little mischief as he could, but loved to do some. I well remember the cruel anxiety which prevailed in the nineteenth year of these inclosures; it spoiled the digestions of several of our literati who had had the misfortune of Cole's intimate friendship, or enmity. One of these was the writer of the Life of Thomas Baker,

the Cambridge Antiquary, who prognosticated all the evil he among others was to endure; and, writhing in fancy under the whip not yet untwisted, justly enough exclaims in his agony, "The attempt to keep these characters from the public till the subjects of them shall be no more, seems to be peculiarly cruel and ungenerous, since it is precluding them from vindicating themselves from such injurious aspersions, as their friends, perhaps however willing, may at that distance of time be incapable of removing." With this author, Mr. Masters, Cole had quarrelled so often, that Masters writes, "I am well acquainted with the fickleness of his disposition for more than forty years past."

When the lid was removed from this Pandora's box, it happened that some of his intimate friends were alive to perceive in what strange figures they were exhibited by their quondam admirer!

COLE, however, bequeathed to the nation, among his unpublished works, a vast mass of antiquities and historical collections, and one valuable legacy of literary materials. When I turned over the papers of this literary antiquary, I found the recorded cries of a literary martyr.

COLE had passed a long life in the pertinacious labour of forming an "Athenæ Cantabrigienses," and other literary collections—designed as a companion to the work of Anthony Wood. These mighty labours exist in more than fifty folio volumes in his own writing. He began these collections about the year 1745; in a fly leaf of 1777, I found the following melancholy state of his feelings and a literary confession, as forcibly expressed as it is painful to read, when we consider that they are the wailings of a most zealous votary:

"In good truth, whoever undertakes this drudgery of an 'Athenæ Cantabrigienses,' must be contented with no prospect of credit and reputation to himself, and with the mortifying reflection that after all his pains and study, through life, he must be looked upon in a humble light, and only as a journeyman to Anthony Wood, whose excellent book of the same sort will ever preclude any other, who shall follow him in the same track, from all hopes of fame; and will only represent him as an imitator of so original a pattern. For, at this time of day, all great characters, both Cantabrigians and Oxonians, are already published to the world, either in his book, or various others; so that the collection, unless the same characters are reprinted here, must be made up of second-rate persons, and the refuse of authorship.—However, as I have begun, and made so large a progress in this undertaking, *it is death to think of leaving it off*, though, from the former considerations, so little credit is to be expected from it."

Such were the fruits, and such the agonies, of nearly half a century of assiduous and zealous literary labour! Cole urges a strong claim to be noticed among our literary calamities. Another of his miseries was his uncertainty in what manner he should dispose of his collections: and he has put down this *naïve* memorandum—"I have long wavered how to dispose of all my MS. volumes; to give them to *King's College*, would be to throw them into a *horsepond*; and I had as lieve do one as the other; they are generally so *conceited of their Latin and Greek, that all other studies are barbarism.*"

The dread of incompleteness has attended the life-labours (if the expression may be allowed) of several other authors who have never published their works. Such was the learned Bishop LLOYD, and the Rev. THOMAS BAKER, who was first engaged in the same pursuit as Cole, and carried it on to the extent of about forty volumes in folio. Lloyd is described by Burnet as having "many volumes of materials upon all subjects, so that he could, with very little labour, write on any of them, with more life in his imagination, and a truer judgment, than may seem consistent with such a laborious course of study; but he did not lay out his learning with the same diligence as he laid it in." It is mortifying to learn, in the words of Johnson, that "he was always hesitating and inquiring, raising objections, and removing them, and waiting for clearer light and fuller discovery." Many of the labours of this learned bishop were at length consumed in the kitchen of his descendant. "Baker (says Johnson), after many years passed in biography, left his manuscripts to be buried in a library, because that was imperfect which could never be perfected." And to complete the absurdity, or to heighten the calamity which the want of these useful labours make every literary man feel, half of the collections of Baker sleep in their dust in a turret of the University; while the other, deposited in our national library at the British Museum, and frequently used, are rendered imperfect by this unnatural divorce.

I will illustrate the character of a laborious author by that of ANTHONY WOOD.

WOOD'S "Athenæ Oxonienses" is a history of near a thousand of our native authors; he paints their characters, and enters into the spirit of their writings. But authors of this complexion, and works of this nature, are liable to be slighted; for the fastidious are petulant, the volatile inexperienced, and those who cultivate a single province in literature are disposed, too often, to lay all others under a state of interdiction.

WARBURTON, in a work thrown out in the heat of unchastised youth, and afterwards withdrawn from public inquiry, has said of the "Athenæ Oxonienses"—

"Of all those writings given us by the learned

Oxford antiquary, there is not one that is not a disgrace to letters; most of them are so to common sense, and some even to human nature. Yet how set out! how tricked! how adorned! how extolled * !"

The whole tenor of Wood's life testifies, as he himself tells us, that "books and MSS. formed his Elysium, and he wished to be dead to the world." This sovereign passion marked him early in life, and the image of death could not disturb it. When young, "he walked mostly alone, was given much to thinking and melancholy." The *delicia* of his life were the more liberal studies of painting and music, intermixed with those of antiquity; nor could his family, who checked such unproductive studies, ever check his love of them. With what a firm and noble spirit he says,

"When he came to full years, he perceived it was his natural genie, and he could not avoid them—they crowded on him—he could never give a reason why he should delight in those studies, more than in others, so prevalent was nature, mixed with a generosity of mind, and a hatred to all that was servile, sneaking, or advantageous for lucre-sake."

These are not the roundings of a period, but the pure expressions of a man who had all the simplicity of childhood in his feelings. Could such vehement emotions have been excited in the unanimated breast of a clod of literature? Thus early Anthony Wood betrayed the characteristics of genius; nor did the literary passion desert him in his last moments. With his dying hands he still grasped his beloved papers, and his last mortal thoughts dwelt on his *Athenæ Oxonienses*.

It is no common occurrence to view an author speechless in the hour of death, yet fervently occupied by his posthumous fame. Two friends went into his study, to sort that vast multitude of papers, notes, letters—his more private ones he had ordered not to be opened for seven years; about two bushels full were ordered for the fire, which they had lighted for the occasion. "As he was expiring, he expressed both his knowledge and approbation of what was done by throwing out his hands."

Turn over his Herculean labour; do not admire less his fearlessness of danger, than his indefatigable pursuit of truth. He wrote of his contemporaries as if he felt a right to judge of them, and as if he were living in the succeeding age; courtier, fanatic, or papist, were much alike to honest Anthony; for he professes himself "such an universal lover of all mankind, that he wished there might be no cheat put upon readers and writers in the business of commendations. And (says he) since every one will have a double balance, one for his own party, and another for his adversary, all he could do, is to amass together what every side thinks will make best weight for themselves. Let posterity hold the scales."

Anthony might have added, "I have held them." This uninterrupted activity of his spirits was the action of a sage, not the bustle of one intent merely on heaping up a book.

"He never wrote in post, with his body and thoughts in a hurry, but in a fixed abode, and with a deliberate pen. And he never concealed an ungrateful truth, nor flourished over a weak place, but in sincerity of meaning and expression."

Anthony Wood cloistered an athletic mind, a hermit critic abstracted from the world, existing more with posterity than amid his contemporaries. His prejudices were the keener from the very energies of the mind that produced them; but, as he practises no deception on his reader, we know the causes of his anger or his love. And, as an original thinker creates a style for himself, from the circumstance of not attending to style at all, but to feeling, so Anthony Wood's has all the peculiarity of the writer. Critics of short views have attempted to screen it from ridicule, attributing his uncouth style to the age he lived in. But not one in his own time, nor since, has composed in the same style. The austerity and the quickness of his feelings, vigorously stamped all their roughness and vivacity on every sentence. He describes his own style as "an honest, plain English dress, without flourishes or affectation of style, as best becomes a history of truth and matters of fact. It is the first (work) of its nature that has ever been printed in our own, or in any other mother-tongue."

It is, indeed, an honest Montaigne-like simplicity. Acrimonious and cynical, he is always sincere, and never dull. Old Anthony to me is an admirable character-painter, for anger and love are often picturesque. And among our literary historians he might be compared, for the effect he produces, to Albert Durer, whose kind of antique rudeness has a sharp outline, neither beautiful nor flowing; and, without a genius for the magic of light and shade, he is too close a copier of Nature to affect us by ideal forms.

The independence of his mind nerved his ample volumes, his fortitude he displayed in the contest with the University itself, and his firmness in censuring Lord Clarendon, the head of his own party. Could such a work, and such an original manner, have proceeded from an ordinary intellect? Wit may sparkle, and sarcasm may bite; but the cause of literature is injured when the industry of such a mind is ranked with that of "the hewers of

* In his "Critical and Philosophical Enquiry into the Causes of Prodigies."

wood, and drawers of water;" ponderous compilers, or creeping commentators. Such a work as the "Athenæ Oxonienses" involved in its pursuits some of the higher qualities of the intellect; a voluntary devotion of life, a sacrifice of personal enjoyments, a noble design combining many views, some present and some prescient, a clear vigorous spirit equally diffused over a vast surface. But it is the hard fate of authors of this class to be levelled with their inferiors!

Let us exhibit one more picture of the calamities of a laborious author, in the character of JOSHUA BARNES, editor of Homer, Euripides, and Anacreon, and the writer of a vast number of miscellaneous compositions in history and poetry. Besides the works he published, he left behind him nearly fifty unfinished ones; many were epic poems, all intended to be in twelve books, and some had reached their eighth! His folio volume of "The History of Edward III." is a labour of valuable research. He wrote with equal facility in Greek, Latin, and his own language, and he wrote all his days; and, in a word, having little or nothing but his Greek professorship, not exceeding forty pounds a year, Barnes, who had a great memory, a little imagination, and no judgment, saw the close of a life, devoted to the studies of humanity, settle around him in gloom and despair. The great idol of his mind was the edition of his Homer, which seems to have completed his ruin; he was haunted all his days with a notion that he was persecuted by envy, and much undervalued by the world; the sad consolation of the secondary and third-rate authors, who often die persuaded of the existence of ideal enemies. To be enabled to publish his Homer at an enormous charge, he wrote a poem, the design of which is to prove that Solomon was the author of the Iliad, and it has been said that this was done to interest his wife, who had some property, to lend her aid towards the publication of so divine a work. This happy pun was applied for his epitaph:—

Joshua Barnes,
Felicis memoriæ, judicium expectans.
Here lieth
Joshua Barnes,
OF HAPPY MEMORY, AWAITING JUDGMENT!

The year before he died he addressed the following letter to the Earl of Oxford, which I transcribe from the original. It is curious to observe how the veteran and unhappy scribbler, after his vows of retirement from the world of letters, thoroughly disgusted with "all human learning," gently hints to his patron, that he has ready for the press, a singular variety of contrasted works, yet even then he did not venture to disclose one-tenth part of his concealed treasures!

TO THE EARL OF OXFORD.

"My Hon. Lord, *Oct.* 16, 1711.

"This, not in any doubt of your goodness and high respect to learning, for I have fresh instances of it every day; but because I am prevented in my design of waiting personally on you, being called away by my business for Cambridge, to read Greek lectures this term; and my circumstances are pressing, being, through the combination of booksellers, and the meaner arts of others, too much prejudiced in the sale. I am not neither sufficiently ascertained whether my Homer and Letters came to your honour; surely the vast charges of that edition has almost broke my courage, there being much more trouble in putting off the impression, and contending with a subtle and unkind world, than in all the study and management of the press.

"Others, my Lord, are younger, and their hopes and helps are fresher; I have done as much in the way of learning as any man living, but have received less encouragement than any, having nothing but my Greek professorship, which is but forty pounds per annum, that I can call my own, and more than half of that is taken up by my expenses of lodging and diet in terme time at Cambridge.

"I was obliged to take up three hundred and fifty pounds on interest towards this last work, whereof I still owe two hundred pounds, and two hundred more for the printing; the whole expense arising to about one thousand pounds. I have lived in the university above thirty years, fellow of a college now above forty years standing, and fifty-eight years of age; am bachelor of divinity, and have preached before kings; but am now your honour's suppliant, and would fain retire from the study of humane learning, which has been so little beneficial to me, if I might have a little prebend, or sufficient anchor to lay hold on; only I have two or three matters ready for the press—an ecclesiastical history, Latin; an heroic poem of the Black Prince, Latin; another of Queen Anne, English, finished; a treatise of Columnes, Latin; and an accurate treatise about Homer, Greek, Latin, &c. I would fain be permitted the honour to make use of your name in some one, or most of these, and to be, &c. JOSHUA BARNES*."

He died nine months afterwards. Homer did not improve in sale; and the sweets of patronage were not even tasted. This, then, is the history of a man of great learning, of the most pertinacious industry, but somewhat allied to the family of the *Scribleri*.

* Harleian MSS. 7523.

THE DESPAIR OF YOUNG POETS.

WILLIAM PATTISON was a young poet who perished in his twentieth year; his character and his fate resemble those of Chatterton. He was one more child of that family of genius whose passions, like the torch, kindle but to consume themselves.

The youth of Pattison was that of a poet. Many become irrecoverably poets by local influence; and Beattie could hardly have thrown his "Minstrel" into a more poetical solitude than the singular spot which was haunted by our young bard. His first misfortune was that of having an anti-poetical parent; his next was that of having discovered a spot which confirmed his poetical habits, inspiring all the melancholy and sensibility he loved to indulge. This spot, which in his fancy resembled some favourite description in Cowley, he called "Cowley's Walk." Some friend, who was himself no common painter of fancy, has delineated the whole scenery with minute touches, and a freshness of colouring, warm with reality. Such a poetical habitation becomes a part of the poet himself, reflecting his character, and even descriptive of his manners.

"On one side of 'Cowley's Walk' is a huge rock, grown over with moss and ivy climbing on its sides, and in some parts small trees spring out of the crevices of the rock; at the bottom are a wild plantation of irregular trees, in every part looking aged and venerable. Among these cavities, one larger than the rest was the cave he loved to sit in: arched like a canopy, its rustic borders were edged with ivy hanging down, overshadowing the place, and hence he called it (for poets must give a name to every object they love) 'Hederinda,' bearing ivy. At the foot of this grotto a stream of water ran along the walk, so that its level path had trees and water on one side, and a wild rough precipice on the other. In winter, this spot looked full of horror—the naked trees, the dark rock, and the desolate waste; but in the spring, the singing of the birds, the fragrancy of the flowers, and the murmuring of the stream, blended all their enchantment."

Here, in the heat of the day, he escaped into the "Hederinda," and shared with friends his rapture and his solitude; and here, through summer nights, in the light of the moon he meditated and melodised his verses, by the gentle fall of the waters. Thus was Pattison fixed and bound up in the strongest spell the demon of poetry ever drew around a susceptible and careless youth.

He was now a decided poet. At Sidney College, in Cambridge, he was greatly loved; till, on a quarrel with a rigid tutor, he rashly cut his name out of the college book, and quitted it for ever in utter thoughtlessness and gaiety, leaving his gown behind, as his *locum tenens*, to make his apology, by pinning on it a satirical farewell.

"Whoever gives himself the pains to stoop,
And take my venerable tatters up,
To his presuming inquisition I,
In *loco Pattisoni*, thus reply:
'Tired with the senseless jargon of the gown,
My master left the college for the town,
And scorns his precious minutes to regale
With wretched college-wit and college-ale.'"

He flew to the metropolis, to take up the trade of a poet.

A translation of Ovid's Epistles had engaged his attention during two years; his own genius seemed inexhaustible; and pleasure and fame were awaiting the poetical emigrant. He resisted all kind importunities to return to college; he could not endure submission, and declares "his spirit cannot bear control." One friend "fears the innumerable temptations to which one of his complexion is liable in such a populous place." Pattison was much loved; he had all the generous impetuosity of youthful genius; but he had resolved on running the perilous career of literary glory, and he added one more to the countless thousands who perish in obscurity.

His first letters are written with the same spirit that distinguishes Chatterton's; all he hopes he seems to realise. He mixes among the wits, dates from Button's, and drinks with Concanen healths to college friends, till they lose their own; more dangerous Muses condescend to exhibit themselves to the young poet in the Park; and he was to be introduced to Pope. All is exultation! Miserable youth! The first thought of prudence appears in a resolution of soliciting subscriptions from all persons, for a volume of poems.

His young friends at college exerted their warm patronage; those in his native North condemn him, and save their crowns; Pope admits of no interview, but lends his name, and bestows half-a-crown for a volume of poetry, which he did not want; the poet wearies kindness, and would extort charity even from brother-poets; petitions lords and ladies; and, as his wants grow on him, his shame decreases.

How the scene has changed in a few months! He acknowledges to a friend, that "his heart was broke through the misfortunes he had fallen under;" he declares "he feels himself near the borders of death." In moments like these, he probably composed the following lines, awfully addressed,

AD CŒLUM!

"Good heaven! this mystery of life explain,
Nor let me think I bear the load in vain;
Lest, with the tedious passage cheerless grown,
Urged by despair, I throw the burden down."

But the torture of genius, when all its passions are strained on the rack, was never more pathetically expressed than in the following letter :—

"Sir,

"If you was ever touched with a sense of humanity, consider my condition: what I *am*, my proposals will inform you; what *I have been*, Sidney College, in Cambridge, can witness; but what *I shall be* some few hours hence, I tremble to think! Spare my blushes!—I have not enjoyed the common necessaries of life for these two days, and can hardly hold to subscribe myself,

"Yours, &c."

The picture is finished—it admits not of another stroke. Such was the complete misery which Savage, Boyse, Chatterton, and more innocent spirits devoted to literature, have endured—but not long—for they must perish in their youth!

Henry Carey was one of our most popular poets; he, indeed, has unluckily met with only dictionary critics, or what is as fatal to genius, the cold undistinguishing commendation of grave men on subjects of humour, wit, and the lighter poetry. The works of Carey do not appear in any of our great collections, where Walsh, Duke, and Yalden slumber on the shelf.

Yet Carey was a true son of the Muses, and the most successful writer in our language. He is the author of several little national poems. In early life he successfully burlesqued the affected versification of Ambrose Philips, in his baby poems, to which he gave the fortunate appellation of "*Namby Pamby*, a panegyric on the new versification;" a term descriptive in sound of those chiming follies, and now become a technical term in modern criticism. Carey's "Namby Pamby" was at first considered by Swift as the satirical effusion of Pope, and by Pope as the humorous ridicule of Swift. His ballad of "Sally in our Alley" was more than once commended for its nature by Addison, and is sung to this day. Of the national song, "God save the King," it is supposed he was the author both of the words and of the music. He was very successful on the stage, and wrote admirable burlesques of the Italian opera, in "The Dragon of Wantley," and "The Dragoness;" and the mock tragedy of "Chrononhotonthologos" is not forgotten. Among his Poems lie still concealed several original pieces; those which have a political turn are particularly good, for the politics of Carey were those of a poet and a patriot. I refer the politician who has any taste for poetry and humour, to "The Grumbletonians, or the Dogs without doors, a Fable," very instructive to those grown-up folks, "The Ins and the Outs." "Carey's Wish" is in this class; and, as the purity of election remains still among the desiderata of every true Briton, a poem on that subject by the patriotic author of our national hymn of "God save the King" may be acceptable.

CAREY'S WISH.

"Cursed be the wretch that's bought and sold,
And barters liberty for gold;
For when election is not free,
In vain we boast of liberty:
And he who sells his single right,
Would sell his country, if he might.

When liberty is put to sale
For wine, for money, or for ale,
The sellers must be abject slaves,
The buyers vile designing knaves;
A proverb it has been of old,
The devil's bought but to be sold.

This maxim in the statesman's school
Is always taught, *divide and rule*.
All parties are to him a joke:
While zealots foam, he fits the yoke.
Let men their reason once resume;
'Tis then the statesman's turn to fume.

Learn, learn, ye Britons, to unite;
Leave off the old exploded bite;
Henceforth let whig and tory cease,
And turn all party-rage to peace;
Rouse and revive your ancient glory;
Unite, and drive the world before you."

To the ballad of "Sally in our Alley" Carey has prefixed an argument so full of nature, that the song may hereafter derive an additional interest from its simple origin. The author assures the reader that the popular notion that the subject of his ballad had been the noted Sally Salisbury, is perfectly erroneous, he being a stranger to her name at the time the song was composed.

"As innocence and virtue were ever the boundaries of his Muse, so in this little poem he had no other view than to set forth the beauty of a chaste and disinterested passion, even in the lowest class of human life. The real occasion was this: A shoemaker's prentice, making holiday with his sweetheart, treated her with a sight of Bedlam, the puppet-shows, the flying-chairs, and all the elegancies of Moorfields; from whence, proceeding to the Farthing Pye-house, he gave her a collation of buns, cheesecakes, gammon of bacon, stuffed beef, and bottled ale; through all which scenes the Author dodged them (charmed with the simplicity of their courtship), from whence he drew this little sketch of Nature; but, being then young and obscure, he was very much ridiculed for this performance; which, nevertheless, made its way into the polite world, and amply recompensed him by the applause of the divine Addison, who was pleased (more than once) to mention it with approbation."

In "The Poet's Resentment" poor Carey had once forsworn "the harlot Muse:"—

"Far, far away then chase the harlot Muse,
Nor let her thus thy noon of life abuse;
Mix with the common crowd, unheard, unseen,
And if again thou tempt'st the vulgar praise,
Mayst thou be crown'd with birch instead of bays!"

Poets make such oaths in sincerity, and break them in rapture.

At the time that this poet could neither walk the streets nor be seated at the convivial board, without listening to his own songs and his own music—for, in truth, the whole nation was echoing his verse, and crowded theatres were applauding his wit and humour—while this very man himself, urged by his strong humanity, founded a "Fund for decayed Musicians"—he was so broken-hearted, and his own common comforts so utterly neglected, that, in despair, not waiting for nature to relieve him from the burden of existence, he laid violent hands on himself; and when found dead, had only a halfpenny in his pocket! Such was the fate of the author of some of the most popular pieces in our language! He left a son, who inherited his misery, and a gleam of his genius.

THE MISERIES OF THE FIRST ENGLISH COMMENTATOR.

Dr. Zachary Grey, the editor of Hudibras, is the father of our modern commentators. His case is rather peculiar; I know not whether the father, by an odd anticipation, was doomed to suffer for the sins of his children, or whether his own have been visited on the third generation; it is certain that never was an author more overpowered by the attacks he received from the light and indiscriminating shafts of ignorant wits. He was ridiculed and abused for having assisted us to comprehend the wit of an author, which, without that aid, at this day would have been nearly lost to us; and whose singular subject involved persons and events which required the very thing he gave,—historical and explanatory notes.

A first thought, and all the danger of an original invention, which is always imperfectly understood by the superficial, was poor Dr. Grey's merit. He was modest and laborious, and he had the sagacity to discover what Butler wanted, and what the public required. His project was a happy thought, to commentate on a singular work which has scarcely a parallel in modern literature, if we except the "Satyre Ménippée" of the French, which is, in prose, the exact counterpart of Hudibras in rhyme; for our rivals have had the same state revolution, in which the same dramatic personages passed over their national stage, with the same incidents, in the civil wars of the ambitious Guises, and the citizen-reformers. They, too, found a Butler, though in prose, a Grey in Duchat, and, as well as they could, a Hogarth. An edition, which appeared in 1711, might have served as the model of Grey's Hudibras.

It was, however, a happy thought in our commentator, to turn over the contemporary writers to collect the events and discover the personages alluded to by Butler; to read what the poet read, to observe what the poet observed. This was at once throwing himself and the reader back into an age, of which even the likeness had disappeared, and familiarising us with distant objects, which had been lost to us in the haze and mists of time. For this, not only a new mode of travelling, but a new road, was to be opened; the secret history, the fugitive pamphlet, the obsolete satire, the ancient comedy—such were the many curious volumes whose dust was to be cleared away, to cast a new radiance on the fading colours of a moveable picture of manners; the wittiest ever exhibited to mankind. This new mode of research, even at this moment, is imperfectly comprehended, still ridiculed even by those who could never have understood a writer who will only be immortal in the degree he is comprehended—and whose wit could not have been felt but for the laborious curiosity of him whose "reading" has been too often aspersed for "such reading"

"As was never read."

Grey was outrageously attacked by all the wits, first by Warburton, in his preface to Shakespeare, who declares, that "he hardly thinks there ever appeared so execrable a heap of nonsense under the name of commentaries, as hath been lately given us on a certain satyric poet of the last age." It is odd enough, Warburton had himself contributed towards these very notes, but, for some cause which has not been discovered, had quarrelled with Dr. Grey. I will venture a conjecture on this great conjectural critic. Warburton was always meditating to give an edition of his own of our old writers, and the sins he committed against Shakespeare he longed to practise on Butler, whose times were, indeed, a favourite period of his researches. Grey had anticipated him—and though Warburton had half reluctantly yielded the few notes he had prepared, his proud heart sickened when he beheld the amazing subscription Grey obtained for his first edition of Hudibras; he received for that work 1500*l.**—a proof that this publication was felt as a want by the public.

* Cole's MSS.

Such, however, is one of those blunt, dogmatic censures in which Warburton abounds, to impress his readers with the weight of his opinions; this great man wrote more for effect than any other of our authors, as appears by his own or some friend's confession, that if his edition of Shakespeare did no honour to that bard, this was not the design of the commentator—which was only to do honour to himself by a display of his own exuberant erudition.

The poignant Fielding, in his preface to his "Journey to Lisbon," has a fling at the gravity of our doctor. "The laborious, much-read Dr. Z. Grey, of whose redundant notes on Hudibras I shall only say, that it is, I am confident, the single book extant in which above 500 authors are quoted, not one of which could be found in the collection of the late Dr. Mead." Mrs. Montague, in her letters, severely characterises the miserable father of English commentators; she wrote in youth and spirits, with no knowledge of books, and *before* even the unlucky commentator had published his work, but wit is the bolder by anticipation.—She observes, that "his dulness may be a proper ballast for doggrel; and it is better that his stupidity should make jest dull than serious and sacred things ridiculous;" alluding to his numerous theological tracts.

Such then are the hard returns which some authors are doomed to receive as the rewards of useful labours from those who do not even comprehend their nature; a wit should not be admitted as a critic till he had first proved, by his gravity, or his dulness if he chooses, that he has some knowledge; for it is the privilege and nature of wit to write fastest and best on what it least understands. Knowledge only encumbers and confines its flights.

THE LIFE OF AN AUTHORESS.

Of all the sorrows in which the female character may participate, there are few more affecting than those of an Authoress;—often insulated and unprotected in society—with all the sensibility of the sex, encountering miseries which break the spirits of men; with the repugnance arising from that delicacy which trembles when it quits its retirement.

My acquaintance with an unfortunate lady of the name of Eliza Ryves, was casual and interrupted; yet I witnessed the bitterness of "hope deferred, which maketh the heart sick." She sank, by the slow wastings of grief, into a grave which probably does not record the name of its martyr of literature.

She was descended from a family of distinction in Ireland; but as she expressed it, "she had been deprived of her birthright by the chicanery of law." In her former hours of tranquillity she had published some elegant odes, had written a tragedy and comedies; all which remained in MS. In her distress, she looked up to her pen as a source of existence; and an elegant genius, and a woman of polished manners, commenced the life of a female trader in literature.

Conceive the repulses of a modest and delicate woman in her attempts to appreciate the value of a manuscript with its purchaser. She has frequently returned from the booksellers to her dreadful solitude to hasten to her bed—in all the bodily pains of misery, she has sought in uneasy slumbers a temporary forgetfulness of griefs which were to recur on the morrow. Elegant literature is always of doubtful acceptance with the public, and Eliza Ryves came at length to try the most masculine exertions of the pen. She wrote for one newspaper much political matter; but the proprietor was too great a politician for the writer of politics, for he only praised the labour he never paid; much poetry for another, in which, being one of the correspondents of Della Crusca, in payment of her verses she got nothing but verses; the most astonishing exertion for a female pen was the entire composition of the historical and political portion of some Annual Register. So little profitable were all these laborious and original efforts, that every day did not bring its "daily bread." Yet even in her poverty her native benevolence could make her generous; for she has deprived herself of her meal, to provide with one, an unhappy family dwelling under the same roof.

Advised to adopt the mode of translation, and being ignorant of the French language, she retired to an obscure lodging at Islington, which she never quitted till she had produced a good version of Rousseau's "Social Compact," Raynal's "Letter to the National Assembly," and finally translated De la Croix's "Review of the Constitutions of the principal States in Europe," in two large volumes, with intelligent notes. All these works, so much at variance with her taste, left her with her health much broken, and a mind which might be said to have nearly survived the body.

Yet even at a moment so unfavourable, her ardent spirit engaged in a translation of Froissart. At the British Museum I have seen her conning over the magnificent and voluminous MS. of the old chronicler, and by its side Lord Berners's version, printed in the reign of Henry VIII. It was evident that his lordship was employed as a spy on Froissart, to inform her of what was going forward in the French camp; and she soon perceived, for her taste was delicate, that it required an ancient lord and knight, with all his

antiquity of phrase, to break a lance with the still more ancient chivalric Frenchman. The familiar elegance of modern style failed to preserve the picturesque touches and the *naïve* graces of the chronicler, who wrote as the mailed knight combated—roughly or gracefully, as suited the tilt or the field. She vailed to Lord Berners; while she felt it was here necessary to understand old French, and then to write in Old English *. During these profitless labours hope seemed to be whispering in her lonely study. Her comedies had been in possession of the managers of the theatres during several years. They had too much merit to be rejected, perhaps too little to be acted. Year passed over year, and the last still repeated the treacherous promise of its brother. The mysterious arts of procrastination are by no one so well systematised as by the theatrical manager, nor its secret sorrows so deeply felt as by the dramatist. One of her comedies, "The Debt of Honour," had been warmly approved at both theatres—where probably a copy of it may still be found. To the honour of one of the managers, he presented her with a hundred pounds on his acceptance of it. Could she avoid then flattering herself with an annual harvest?

But even this generous gift, which involved in it such golden promises, could not for ten years preserve its delusion. "I feel," said Eliza Ryves, "the necessity of some powerful patronage, to bring my comedies forward to the world with *éclat*, and secure them an admiration which, should it even be deserved, is seldom bestowed, unless some leading judge of literary merit gives the sanction of his applause; and then the world will chime in with his opinion, without taking the trouble to inform themselves whether it be founded in justice or partiality." She never suspected that her comedies were not comic!—but who dare hold an argument with an ingenuous mind, when it reasons from a right principle, with a wrong application to itself? It is true that a writer's connexions have often done a great deal for a small author, and enabled some favourites of literary fashion to enjoy a usurped reputation; but it is not so evident that Eliza Ryves was a comic writer, although, doubtless, she appeared another Menander to herself. And thus an author dies in a delusion of self-flattery!

The character of Eliza Ryves was rather tender and melancholy, than brilliant and gay; and like the bruised perfume—breathing sweetness when broken into pieces. She traced her sorrows in a work of fancy, where her feelings were at least as active as her imagination. It is a small volume, entitled "The Hermit of Snowden." Albert, opulent and fashionable, feels a passion for Lavinia, and meets the kindest return; but, having imbibed an ill opinion of women from his licentious connexions, he conceived they were slaves of passion, or of avarice. He wrongs the generous nature of Lavinia, by suspecting her of mercenary views; hence arise the perplexities of the hearts of both. Albert affects to be ruined, and spreads the report of an advantageous match. Lavinia feels all the delicacy of her situation; she loves, but "she never told her love." She seeks for her existence in her literary labours, and perishes in want.

In the character of Lavinia, our authoress, with all the melancholy sagacity of genius, foresaw and has described her own death!—the dreadful solitude to which she was latterly condemned, when in the last stage of her poverty; her frugal mode of life; her acute sensibility; her defrauded hopes; and her exalted fortitude. She has here formed a register of all that occurred in her solitary existence. I will give one scene,—to me it is pathetic,—for it is like a scene at which I was present:

"Lavinia's lodgings were about two miles from town, in an obscure situation. I was showed up to a mean apartment, where Lavinia was sitting at work, and in a dress which indicated the greatest economy. I inquired what success she had met with in her dramatic pursuits. She waved her head, and, with a melancholy smile, replied, 'that her hopes of ever bringing any piece on the stage were now entirely over; for she found that more interest was necessary for the purpose than she could command, and that she had for that reason laid aside her comedy for ever!' While she was talking, came in a favourite dog of Lavinia's, which I had used to caress. The creature sprang to my arms, and I received him with my usual fondness. Lavinia endeavoured to conceal a tear which trickled down her cheek. Afterwards she said, 'Now that I live entirely alone, I show Juno more attention than I had used to do formerly. *The heart wants something to be kind to.*—And it consoles us for the loss of society, to see even an animal derive happiness from the endearments we bestow upon it.'"

Such was Eliza Ryves! not beautiful nor interesting in her person, but with a mind of fortitude, susceptible of all the delicacy of feminine softness, and virtuous amid her despair.

* This version of Lord Berners has been lately reprinted.

THE INDISCRETION OF AN HISTORIAN.

THOMAS CARTE.

"CARTE," says Mr. Hallam, "is the most exact historian we have;" and Daines Barrington prefers his authority to that of any other, and

many other writers confirm this opinion. Yet had this historian been an ordinary compiler, he could not have incurred a more mortifying fate; for he was compelled to retail in shilling numbers that invaluable history which we have only learned of late times to appreciate, and which was the laborious fruits of self-devotion.

Carte was the first of our historians who had the sagacity and the fortitude to ascertain where the true sources of our history lie. He discovered a new world, beyond the old one of our research, and not satisfied in gleaning the *res historica* from its original writers, a merit which has not always been possessed by some of our popular historians, Carte opened those subterraneous veins of secret history from whence even the original writers of our history, had they possessed them, might have drawn fresh knowledge and more ample views. Our domestic or civil history was scarcely attempted till Carte planned it; while all his laborious days and his literary travels on the Continent were absorbed in the creation of a *History of England*, and of a *Public Library* in the metropolis, for we possessed neither. A diligent foreigner, Rapin, had compiled our history, and had opportunely found in the vast collection of Rymer's "Fœdera" a rich accession of knowledge; but a foreigner could not sympathise with the feelings, or even understand the language, of the domestic story of our nation; our rolls and records, our state-letters, the journals of parliament, and those of the privy-council; an abundant source of private memoirs; and the hidden treasures in the state-paper office, the Cottonian and Harleian libraries; all these, and much besides, the sagacity of Carte contemplated. He had further been taught—by his own examination of the true documents of history, which he found preserved among the ancient families of France, who with a warm patriotic spirit, worthy of imitation, "often carefully preserved in their families the acts of their ancestors;" and the *trésor des chartes* and the *dépôt pour les affaires étrangères* (the state-paper office of France),—that the history of our country is interwoven with that of its neighbours, as well as with that of our own countrymen*.

Carte, with these enlarged views, and firm with diligence which never paused, was aware that such labours—both for the expense and assistance they demand—exceeded the powers of a private individual; but, "what a single man cannot do," he said, "may be easily done by a society, and the value of an opera subscription would be sufficient to patronise a History of England." His valuable "History of the Duke of Ormond" had sufficiently announced the sort of man who solicited this necessary aid; nor was the moment unpropitious to his fondest hopes, for a *Society for the Encouragement of Learning* had been formed, and this impulse of public spirit, however weak, had, it would seem, roused into action some unexpected quarters. When Carte's project was made known, a large subscription was raised to defray the expense of transcripts, and afford a sufficient independence to the historian; many of the nobility and the gentry subscribed ten or twenty guineas annually, and several of the corporate bodies in the city honourably appeared as the public patrons of the literature of their nation. He had, perhaps, nearly a thousand a year subscribed, which he employed on the History. Thus everything promised fair both for the history and for the historian of our fatherland, and about this time he zealously published another proposal for the erection of a public library in the Mansion-house. "There is not," observed Carte, "a great city in Europe so ill-provided with public libraries as London." He enters into a very interesting and minute narrative of the public libraries of Paris*. He then also suggested the purchase of ten thousand manuscripts of the Earl of Oxford, which the nation now possess in the Harleian collection.

Though Carte failed to persuade our opulent citizens to purchase this costly honour, it is probably to his suggestion that the nation owes the British Museum. The ideas of the literary man are never thrown away, however vain at the moment, or however profitless to himself. Time preserves without injuring the image of his mind, and a following age often performs what the preceding failed to comprehend.

It was in 1743 that this work was projected, in 1747 the first volume appeared. One single act of indiscretion, an unlucky accident rather than a premeditated design, overturned in a moment this monument of history;—for it proved that our Carte, however enlarged were his views of what history ought to consist, and however experienced in collecting its most authentic materials, and accurate in their statement, was infected by a superstitious jacobitism, which seemed likely to spread itself through his extensive history. Carte indeed was no philosopher, but a very faithful historian.

Having unhappily occasion to discuss whether the King of England had, from the time of Edward the Confessor, the power of healing inherent

* It is much to the honour of Carte, that the French acknowledge that his publication of the *Rolles Gascognes* gave to them the first idea of their learned work, the *Notice des Diplomes*.

* This paper, which is a great literary curiosity, is preserved by Mr. Nichols in his Literary History, vol. ii.

in him before his unction, or whether the gift was conveyed by ecclesiastical hands, to show the efficacy of the royal touch, he added an idle story, which had come under his own observation, of a person who appeared to have been so healed. Carte said of this unlucky personage, so unworthily introduced five hundred years before he was born, that he had been sent to Paris to be touched by "the eldest lineal descendant of a race of kings who had indeed for a long succession of ages cured that distemper by the royal touch." The insinuation was unquestionably in favour of the Pretender, although the name of the prince was not avowed, and was a sort of promulgation of the right divine to the English throne.

The first news our author heard of his elaborate history was the discovery of this unforeseen calamity; the public indignation was roused, and subscribers, public and private, hastened to withdraw their names. The historian was left forlorn and abandoned amid his extensive collections, and Truth, which was about to be drawn out of her well by this robust labourer, was no longer imagined to lie concealed at the bottom of the waters.

Thunderstruck at this dreadful reverse to all his hopes, and witnessing the unquitted labour of more than thirty years withered in an hour, the unhappy Carte drew up a faint appeal; rendered still more weak by a long and improbable tale, that the objectionable illustration had been merely a private note which by mistake had been printed, and only designed to show that the person who had been healed, improperly attributed his cure to the sanative virtue of the regal unction; since the prince in question had never been anointed. But this was plunging from Scylla into Charybdis, for it inferred that the Stuarts inherited the heavenly-gifted touch by descent. This could not avail; yet heavy was the calamity! for now an historian of the utmost probity and exactness, and whose labours were never equalled for their scope and extent, was ruined for an absurd but not peculiar opinion, and an indiscretion which was more ludicrous than dishonest.

This shock of public opinion was met with a fortitude which only strong minds experience; Carte was the true votary of study,—by habit, by devotion, and by pleasure, he persevered in producing an invaluable folio every two years; but from three thousand copies he was reduced to seven hundred and fifty, and the obscure patronage of the few who knew to appreciate them. Death only arrested the historian's pen—in the fourth volume. We have lost the important period of the reign of the second Charles, of which Carte declared that he had read "a series of memoirs from the beginning to the end of that reign which would have laid open all those secret intrigues which Burnet with all his genius for conjecture does not pretend to account for."

So precious were the MS. collections Carte left behind him, that the proprietor valued them at 1500*l.*; Philip Earl of Hardwicke paid 200*l.* only for the perusal, and Macpherson a larger sum for their use; and Hume, without Carte, would scarcely have any authorities. Such was the calamitous result of Carte's historical labours, who has left others of a more philosophical cast, and of a finer taste in composition, to reap the harvest whose soil had been broken by his hand.

LITERARY RIDICULE.

ILLUSTRATED BY SOME ACCOUNT OF A LITERARY SATIRE.

RIDICULE may be considered as a species of eloquence; it has all its vehemence, all its exaggeration, all its power of diminution; it is irresistible! Its business is not with truth, but with its appearance; and it is this similitude, in perpetual comparison with the original, which, raising contempt, produces the ridiculous.

There is nothing real in ridicule; the more exquisite, the more it borrows from the imagination. When directed towards an individual, by preserving a unity of character in all its parts, it produces a fictitious personage, so modelled on the prototype, that we know not to distinguish the true one from the false. Even with an intimate knowledge of the real object, the ambiguous image slides into our mind, for we are at least as much influenced in our opinions by our imagination, as by our judgment. Hence some great characters have come down to us, spotted with the taints of indelible wit; and a satirist of this class, sporting with distant resemblances and fanciful analogies, has made the fictitious accompany for ever the real character. Piqued with Akenside, for some reflections against Scotland, Smollett has exhibited a man of great genius and virtue as a most ludicrous personage; and who can discriminate, in the ridiculous physician in "Peregrine Pickle," what is real from what is fictitious*?

* Of AKENSIDE few particulars have been recorded, for the friend who best knew him was of so cold a temper with regard to public opinion, that he has not, in his account, revealed a solitary feature in the character of the Poet. Yet Akenside's mind and manners were of a fine romantic cast, drawn from the moulds of classical antiquity. Such was the charm of his converse, that he even heated the cold and sluggish mind of Sir John Hawkins, who has, with unusual vivacity, described a day spent with him in the country. As I have mentioned the fictitious physician in Peregrine Pickle, let the same page show the

The banterers and ridiculers possess this provoking advantage over sturdy honesty or nervous sensibility—their amusing fictions affect the world more than the plain tale that would put them down. They excite our risible emotions, while they are reducing their adversary to contempt—otherwise they would not be distinguished from gross slanderers. When the wit has gained over the laughers on his side, he has struck a blow which puts his adversary *hors de combat*. A grave reply can never wound ridicule, which, assuming all forms, has really none. Witty calumny and licentious raillery are airy nothings that float about us, invulnerable from their very nature, like those chimeras of hell which the sword of Æneas could not pierce—yet these shadows of truth, these false images, these fictitious realities, have made heroism tremble, turned the eloquence of wisdom into folly, and bowed down the spirit of honour itself.

Not that the legitimate use of RIDICULE is denied: the wisest men have been some of the most exquisite ridiculers; from Socrates to the Fathers, and from the Fathers to Erasmus, and from Erasmus to Butler and Swift. Ridicule is more efficacious than argument; when that keen instrument cuts what cannot be untied. "The Rehearsal" wrote down the unnatural taste for the rhyming heroic tragedies, and brought the nation back from sound to sense, from rant to passion. More important events may be traced in the history of Ridicule. When a certain set of intemperate Puritans, in the reign of Elizabeth, the ridiculous reformists of abuses in church and state, congregated themselves under the literary *nom de guerre* of *Martin Mar-prelate*, a stream of libels ran throughout the nation. The grave discourses of the archbishop and the prelates could never silence the hardy and concealed libellers. They employed a moveable printing-press, and the publishers perpetually shifting their place, long escaped detection. They declared their works were "printed in Europe, not far from some of the bouncing priests;" or they were "printed over sea, in Europe, within two furlongs of a bouncing priest, at the cost and charges of Martin Mar-prelate, gent." It was then that TOM NASH, whom I am about to introduce to the reader's more familiar acquaintance, the most exquisite banterer of that age of genius, turned on them their own weapons, and annihilated them into silence when they found themselves paid in their own base coin. He rebounded their popular ribaldry on themselves, with such replies as "Pap with a hatchet, or a fig for my god-son; or, crack me this nut. To be sold, at the sign of the Crab-tree Cudgel, in Thwack-coat lane*." Not less biting was his "Almond for a Parrot, or an Alms for Martin." Nash first silenced *Martin Mar-prelate*, and the government afterwards hanged him; Nash might be vain of the greater honour. A ridiculer then is the best champion to meet another ridiculer; their scurrilities magically undo each other.

But the abuse of ridicule is not one of the least calamities of literature, when it withers genius, and gibbets whom it ought to enshrine. Never let us forget that Socrates before his judges asserted, that "his persecution originated in the licensed raillery of Aristophanes, which had so unduly influenced the popular mind during *several years!*" And thus a fictitious Socrates, not the great moralist, was condemned. Armed with the most licentious ridicule, the Aretine of our own country and times has proved that its chief magistrate was not protected by the shield of domestic and public virtues; a false and distorted image of an intelligent monarch could cozen the gross many, and aid the purposes of the subtle few.

There is a plague-spot in ridicule, and the man who is touched with it, can be sent forth as the jest of his country.

The literary reign of Elizabeth, so fertile in every kind of genius, exhibits a remarkable instance, in the controversy between the witty Tom Nash and the learned Gabriel Harvey. It will illustrate the nature of *the fictions of ridicule*, expose the materials of which its shafts are composed, and the secret arts by which ridicule can level a character which seems to be placed above it.

GABRIEL HARVEY was an author of considerable rank, but with two learned brothers, as Wood tells us, "had the ill luck to fall into the

real one. I shall transcribe Sir John's forgotten words—omitting his "neat and elegant dinner:"—"Akenside's conversation was of the most delightful kind, learned, instructive, and, without any affectation of wit, cheerful and entertaining. One of the pleasantest days of my life I passed with him, Mr. Dyson, and another friend, at Putney—where the enlivening sunshine of a summer's day, and the view of an unclouded sky, were the least of our gratifications. In perfect good-humour with himself and all about him, he seemed to feel a joy that he lived, and poured out his gratulations to the great Dispenser of all felicity, in expressions that Plato himself might have uttered on such an occasion. In conversations with select friends, and those whose studies had been nearly the same with his own, it was a usual thing with him, in libations to the memory of eminent men among the ancients, to bring their characters into view, and expatiate on those particulars of their lives that had rendered them famous." Observe the arts of the ridiculer! he seized on the romantic enthusiasm of Akenside, and turned it to *the cookery of the ancients!*

* This pamphlet has been ascribed to John Lilly, but it must be confessed that its native vigour strangely contrasts with the famous *Euphuism* of that refined writer.

hands of that noted and restless buffoon, Tom Nash."

Harvey is not unknown to the lover of poetry, from his connexion with Spenser, who loved and revered him. He is the Hobynol whose poem is prefixed to the Faery Queen, who introduced Spenser to Sir Philip Sidney: and, besides his intimacy with the literary characters of his times, he was a Doctor of Laws, an erudite scholar, and distinguished as a poet. Such a man could hardly be contemptible; and yet, when some little peculiarities become aggravated, and his works are touched by the caustic of the most adroit banterer of that age of wit, no character has descended to us with such grotesque deformity, exhibited in so ludicrous an attitude.

Harvey was a pedant, but pedantry was part of the erudition of an age when our national literature was passing from its infancy; he introduced hexameter verses into our language, and pompously laid claim to an invention which, designed for the reformation of English verse, was practised till it was found sufficiently ridiculous. His style was infected with his pedantic taste, and the hard outline of his satirical humour betrays the scholastic cynic, not the airy and fluent wit. He had, perhaps, the foibles of a man who was clearing himself from obscurity; he prided himself on his family alliances, while he fastidiously looked askance on the trade of his father, a rope-manufacturer. He was somewhat rich in his apparel, according to the rank in society he held; and, hungering after the notice of his friends, they fed him on soft sonnet and relishing dedication, till Harvey ventured to publish a collection of panegyrics on himself—and thus gravely stepped into a niche erected to Vanity. At length he and his two brothers, one a divine and the other a physician, became students of astronomy; then an astronomer usually ended in an almanac-maker, and above all, in an astrologer;—an avocation which tempted a man to become a prophet. Their "sharp and learned judgment on earthquakes" drove the people out of their senses (says Wood); but when nothing happened of their predictions, the brothers received a severe castigation from those great enemies of prophets, the wits. The buffoon, Tarleton, celebrated for his extempore humour, jested on them at the theatre; Elderton, a drunken ballad-maker, "consumed his ale-crammed nose to nothing in bear-bating them with bundles of ballads." One on the earthquake commenced with "Quake! quake! quake!" They made the people laugh at their false terrors, or, as Nash humorously describes their fanciful panic, "when they sweated and were not a haire the worse." Thus were the three learned brothers beset by all the town-wits; Gabriel had the hardihood, with all undue gravity, to charge pell-mell among the whole knighthood of drollery; a circumstance probably alluded to by Spenser, in a sonnet addressed to Harvey:

"Harvey, the happy above happier men,
I read; that sitting like a looker-on
Of this worlde's stage, dost note with *critique pen*
The sharp dislikes of each condition;
And, as one carelesse of suspition,
Ne fawnest for the favour of the great;
Ne fearest foolish reprehension
Of faulty men, which daunger to thee threat,
But freely doest of what thee list, entreat,
Like a great lord of peerlesse liberty.—"

The "foolish reprehension of faulty men, threatening Harvey with danger," describes that gregarious herd of town-wits in the age of Elizabeth; Kit Marlow, Robert Greene, Dekker, Nash, &c.; men of no moral principle, of high passions, and the most pregnant Lucianic wits who ever flourished at one period*. Unfortunately for the learned Harvey, his "critique pen," which is strange in so polished a mind and so curious a student, indulged a sharpness of invective which would have been peculiar to himself, had his adversary, Nash, not quite outdone him. Their pamphlets foamed against each other, till Nash, in his vehement invective, involved the whole generation of the Harveys, made one brother more ridiculous than the other, and even attainted the fair name of Gabriel's respectable sister. Gabriel, indeed, after the death of Robert Greene, the crony of Nash, sitting like a vampire on his grave, sucked blood from his corpse, in a memorable narrative of the debaucheries and miseries of this town-wit. I throw into the note the most awful satirical address I ever read†. It became necessary

* Harvey, in the title-page of his "Pierce's Supererogation," has placed an emblematic woodcut, expressive of his own confidence, and his contempt of the wits. It is a lofty palm-tree, with its durable and impenetrable trunk; at its feet lie a heap of serpents, darting their tongues, and filthy toads, in vain attempting to pierce or to pollute it. The Italian motto, wreathed among the branches of the palm, declares, *Il vostro malignare non giova nulla;* Your malignity avails nothing.

† Among those Sonnets, in Harvey's "Foure Letters, and certaine Sonnets, especially touching Robert Greene and other parties by him abused, 1592," there is one, which, with great originality of conception, has an equal vigour of style, and causticity of satire, on Robert Greene's death. John Harvey the physician, who was then dead, is thus made to address the town-wit, and the libeller of himself and his family. If Gabriel was the writer of this singular Sonnet, as he undoubtedly is of the verses to Spenser, subscribed Hobynol, it must be confessed he is a Poet, which he never appears in his English hexameters:—

to dry up the floodgates of these rival ink-horns, by an order of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The order is a remarkable fragment of our literary history, and is thus expressed: "That all Nashe's bookes and Dr. Harvey's bookes be taken where-soever they may be found, and that none of the said bookes be ever printed hereafter."

This extraordinary circumstance accounts for the excessive rarity of Harvey's "Foure Letters, 1592," and that literary scourge of Nash's, "Have with you to Saffron-Walden (Harvey's residence), or Gabriel Harvey's hunt is vp, 1596;" pamphlets now as costly as if they consisted of leaves of gold.

Nash, who, in his other works, writes in a style as flowing as Addison's, with hardly an obsolete vestige, has rather injured this literary invective, by the evident burlesque he affects of Harvey's pedantic idiom; and for this Mr. Malone has hastily censured him, without recollecting the aim of this modern Lucian *. The delicacy of irony; the *sous-entendu*, that subtlety of indicating what is not told; all that poignant satire, which is the keener for its polish, were not practised by our first vehement satirists; but a bantering masculine humour, a style stamped in the heat of fancy, with all the life-touches of strong individuality, characterise these licentious wits. They wrote then as the old *fabliers* told their tales, naming everything by its name; our refinement cannot approve, but it cannot diminish their real nature, and among our elaborate graces, their *naïveté* must be still wanting.

In this literary satire Nash has interwoven a kind of ludicrous biography of Harvey; and seems to have anticipated the character of Martinus Scriblerus. I leave the grosser parts of this invective untouched; for my business is not with *slander*, but with *ridicule*.

Nash opens as a skilful lampooner; he knew well that ridicule, without the appearance of truth, was letting fly an arrow upwards, touching no one. Nash accounts for his protracted silence by adroitly declaring, that he had taken these two or three year to get perfect intelligence of Harvey's "Life and conversation; one true point whereof well sat downe will more excruciate him than *knocking him about the ears with his own style* in a hundred sheets of paper."

And with great humour says—

"As long as it is since he writ against me, so long have I given him a lease of his life, and he hath only held it by my mercy; and now let him thank his friends for this heavy load of disgrace I lay upon him, since I do it but to show my sufficiency; and they urging what a triumph he had over me, hath made me ransack my standish more than I would."

In the history of such a literary hero as Gabriel, the birth has ever been attended by portents. Gabriel's mother "dreamt a dream," that she was delivered "of an immense elder gun that can shoot nothing but pellets of chewed paper; and thought, instead of a boy, she was brought to bed of one of those kistrell birds called a wind-sucker." At the moment of his birth came into the world "a calf with a double tongue and eares longer than any asse's, with his feet turned backwards." Facetious analogies of Gabriel's literary genius!

He then paints to the life the grotesque portrait of Harvey; so that the man himself stands alive before us.—"He was of an adust swarth choleric dye, like restie bacon, or a dried scate-fish; his skin riddled and crumpled like a piece of burnt parchment, with channels and creases in his face, and wrinkles and frets of old age." Nash dexterously attributes this premature old age to his own talents; exulting humorously—

"I have brought him low, and shrewdly broken him; look on his head, and you shall find a gray haire for euerie line I have writ against him; and you shall haue all his beard white too by the time he hath read ouer this booke."

To give a finishing to the portrait, and to reach

JOHN HARVEY the Physician's Welcome to ROBERT GREENE!

"Come, fellow Greene, come to thy gaping grave,
Bid vanity and foolery farewell,
That ouerlong hast plaid the mad-brained knaue,
And ouerloud hast rung the bawdy bell.
Vermine to vermine must repair at last;
No fitter house for busie folke to dwell;
Thy conny-catching pageants are past†,
Some other must those arrant stories tell;
These hungry wormes thinke long for their repast;
Come on; I pardon thy offence to me;
It was thy living; be not so aghast!
A fool and a physitian may agree!
And for my brothers never vex thyself;
They are not to disease a buried elfe."

* Nash was a great favourite with the wits of his day. One calls him "our true English Aretine," another, "Sweet satyric Nash," a third describes his Muse as "armed with a gag-tooth (a tusk), and his pen possessed with Hercules's furies." He is well characterised in "The Return from Parnassus."

"His style was witty, tho' he had some gall;
Something he might have mended, so may all;
Yet this I say, that for *a mother's wit*,
Few men have ever seen the like of it."

Nash abounds with "Mother-wit;" but he was also educated at the University, with every advantage of classical studies.

† Greene had written "The Art of Coney-catching," a great adept in the arts of a town-life.

the climax of personal contempt, he paints the sordid misery in which he lived at Saffron-Walden: —"Enduring more hardness than a camell, who will liue four dayes without water, and feedes on nothing but thistles and wormwood, as he feeds on his estate on trotters, sheep porknells, and buttered rootes, in an hexameter meditation."

In his Venetian velvet and pantofles of pride, we are told—

"He looks, indeed, like a case of tooth-pickes, or a lute-pin stuck in a suit of apparell. An Vsher of a dancing schoole, he is such a *basia de vmbra de vmbra de los pedes;* a kisser of the shadow of your feetes shadow he is!"

This is, doubtless, a portrait resembling the original, with its Cervantic touches; Nash would not have risked what the eyes of his readers would instantly have proved to be fictitious; and, in fact, though the *Grangerites* know of no portrait of Gabriel Harvey, they will find a wood cut of him by the side of this description; it is, indeed, in a most pitiable attitude, expressing that gripe of criticism which seized on Gabriel "upon the news of the going in hand of my booke."

The ponderosity and prolixity of Gabriel's "period of a mile," are described with a facetious extravagance, which may be given as a specimen of the eloquence of ridicule. Harvey entitled his various pamphlets "Letters."—

"More letters yet from the doctor? Out upon it, here's a packet of epistling, as bigge as a packe of woollen cloth, or a stack of salt fish. Carrier, didst thou bring it by wayne, or by horsebacke? By wayne, sir, and it hath crackt me three axle-trees.—*Heavie* newes! Take them again! I will never open them.—My cart (quoth he deep-sighing) hath cryde creake under them fortie times euerie furlong; wherefore if you be a good man rather make mud-walls with them, mend high-ways, or damme up quagmires with them.

"When I came to unrip and unbumbast this *Gargantuan* bag pudding, and found nothing in it but dogs tripes, swines livers, oxe galls, and sheepes guts, I was in a bitterer chafe than anie cooke at a long sermon, when his meat burnes.

"O 'tis an vnsconscionable vast gor-bellied volume, bigger bulkt than a Dutch hoy, and more cumbersome than a payre of Switzer's galeaze breeches."

And in the same ludicrous style he writes—

"One epistle thereof to John Wolfe (Harvey's printer) I took and weighed in an ironmonger's scale, and it counter poyseth a cade* of herrings with three Holland cheeses. It was rumoured about the Court that the guard meant to trie masteries with it before the Queene, and instead of throwing the sledge, or the hammer, to hurle it foorth at the armes end for a wager.

"Sixe and thirtie sheets it comprehendeth, which with him is but sixe and thirtie full points (periods); for he makes no more difference 'twixt a sheet of paper and a full pointe, than there is twixt two black puddings for a pennie, and a pennie for a pair of black puddings. Yet these are but the shortest prouerbes of his wit, for he never bids a man good morrow, but he makes a speech as long as a proclamation, nor drinkes to anie, but he reads a lecture of three howers long, *de Arte bibendi.* O 'tis a precious apothegmatical pedant."

It was the foible of Harvey to wish to conceal the humble avocation of his father: this forms a perpetual source of the bitterness or the pleasantry of Nash, who, indeed, calls his pamphlet "a full answer to the eldest son of the halter maker," which, he says, "is death to Gabriel to remember; wherefore from time to time he doth nothing but turmoile his thoughts how to invent new pedigrees, and what great nobleman's bastard he was likely to be, not whose sonne he is reputed to be. Yet he would not have a shoo to put on his foote if his father had not traffiqued with the hangman.—Harvey nor his brothers cannot bear to be called the sonnes of a rope-maker, which, by his private confession to some of my friends, was the only thing that most set him afire against me. Turne over his two bookes he hath published against me, wherein he hath clapt paper God's plentie, if that could press a man to death, and see if, in the waye of answer, or otherwise, he once mentioned *the word rope-maker*, or come within forty foot of it; except in one place of his first booke, where he nameth it not neither, but goes thus cleanly to worke:—'and may not a good sonne have a reprobate for his father?' a periphrase of a rope-maker, which, if I should shryue myself, I never heard before." According to Nash, Gabriel took his oath before a justice, that his father was an honest man, and kept his sons at the Universities a long time. "I confirmed it, and added, Ay! which is more, three proud sonnes, that when they met the hangman, their father's best customer, would not put off their hats to him—"

Such repeated raillery on this foible of Harvey touched him more to the quick, and more raised the public laugh, than any other point of attack; for it was merited. Another foible was, perhaps, the finical richness of Harvey's dress, adopting the Italian fashions on his return from Italy, "when he made no bones of taking the wall of Sir Philip Sidney, in his black Venetian velvet." On this the fertile invention of Nash raises a scandalous anecdote concerning Gabriel's wardrobe; "a tale

* A cade is 500 herrings; a great quantity of an article of no value!

of his hobby-horse reuelling and domineering at Audley-end, when the Queen was there; to which place Gabriel came ruffling it out, hufty tufty, in his suit of veluet—" which he had "untrussed, and pelted the outside from the lining of an old velvet saddle he had borrowed!"—"The rotten mould of that worm-eaten relique, he means, when he dies, to hang over his tomb for a monument*." Harvey was proud of his refined skill in "Tuscan authors," and too fond of their worse conceits. Nash alludes to his travels in Italy, "to fetch him twopenny worth of Tuscanism, quite renouncing his natural English accents and gestures, wrested himself wholly to the Italian punctilios, painting himself like a courtezan, [till, the Queen declared, 'he looked something like an Italian!' At which he roused his plumes, pricked his ears, and run away with the bridle betwixt his teeth." These were malicious tales, to make his adversary contemptible, whenever the merry wits at court were willing to sharpen themselves on him.

One of the most difficult points of attack was to break through that bastion of sonnets and panegyrics with which Harvey had fortified himself by the aid of his friends, against the assaults of Nash. Harvey had been commended by the learned and the ingenious. Our Lucian, with his usual adroitness, since he could not deny Harvey's intimacy with Spenser and Sidney, gets rid of their suffrages by this malicious sarcasm: "It is a miserable thing for a man to be said to have had friends, and now to have neer a one left!" — As for the others, whom Harvey calls "his gentle and liberall friends," Nash boldly caricatures the grotesque crew, as "tender itchie brained infants, that cared not what they did, so they might come in print; worthless whippets, and jackstraws, who meeter it in his commendation, whom he would compare with the highest." The works of these young writers he describes by an image exquisitely ludicrous and satirical:—

"These mushrumpes, who pester the world with their pamphlets, are like those barbarous people in the hot countries, who, when they have bread to make, doe no more than clap the dowe upon a post on the outside of their houses, and there leave it to the sun to bake; so their indigested conceipts, far rawer than anie dowe, at all adventures upon the post they clap, pluck them off who will, and think they have made as good a batch of poetrie as may be."

Of Harvey's list of friends he observes:—

"To a bead-roll of learned men and lords, he appeals, whether he be an asse or no?"

Harvey had said, "Thomas Nash, from the top of his wit looking down upon simple creatures, calleth Gabriel Harvey a dunce, a foole, an ideot, a dolt, a goose-cap, an asse, and so forth; for some of the residue is not to be spoken but with his owne mannerly mouth; but he should have shewed particularlie which wordes in my letters were the wordes of a dunce; which sentences the sentences of a foole; which arguments the arguments of an ideot; which opinions the opinions of a dolt; which judgments the judgments of a goose-cap; which conclusions the conclusions of an asse†."

Thus Harvey reasons, till he becomes unreasonable; one would have imagined that the literary satires of our English Lucian had been voluminous enough, without the mathematical demonstration. The banterers seem to have put poor Harvey nearly out of his wits; he and his friends felt their blows too profoundly; they were much too thin-skinned, and the solemn air of Harvey in his graver moments at their menaces is extremely ludicrous. They frequently called him *Gabrielissime Gabriel*, which quintessence of himself seems to have mightily affected him. They threatened to confute his letters till eternity—which seems to have put him in despair. The following passage, descriptive of Gabriel's distresses, may excite a smile.

"This grand confuter of my letters says, 'Gabriel, if there be any wit or industrie in thee, now I will dare it to the vttermost; write of what thou wilt, in what language thou wilt, and I will confute it, and answere it. Take Truth's part, and I will proouve truth to be no truth, marching ovt of thy dung-voiding mouth.' He will never leave me as long as he is able to lift a pen, *ad infinitum;* if I reply, he has a rejoinder; and for my brief *triplication*, he is prouided with a *quadruplication*, and so he mangles my sentences, hacks my arguments, wrenches my words, chops and changes my phrases, even to the disjoyning and dislocation of my whole meaning."

Poor Harvey! he knew not that there was *nothing real* in ridicule, *no end* to its merry malice!

Harvey's taste for hexameter verses, which he so unnaturally forced into our language, is admirably ridiculed. Harvey had shown his taste for these metres by a variety of poems, to whose subjects Nash thus sarcastically alludes:—

"It had grown with him into such a dictionary custom, that no may-pole in the street, no wethercocke on anie church-steeple, no arbour, no lawrell,

* This unlucky Venetian velvet coat of Harvey had also produced a "Quippe for an Vpstart Courtier, or a quaint dispute between Veluet-breeches and Cloth-breeches," which poor Harvey declares was "one of the most licentious and intolerable invectives." This blow had been struck by Greene on the "Italianated" Courtier.

† "Pierce's Supererogation, or a new praise of the Old Asse," 1593.

no yewe-tree, he would ouerskip, without hayling in this manner. After supper, if he chaneet to play at cards with a queen of harts in his hands, he would run upon men's and women's hearts all the night."

And he happily introduces here one of the miserable hexameter conceits of Harvey—

"Stout hart and sweet hart, yet stoutest hart to be stooped."

Harvey's "Encomium Lauri" thus ridiculously commences,

"What might I call this tree? A lawrell? O bonny lawrell,
Needes to thy bowes will I bow this knee, and vayle my bonetto;"

which Nash most happily burlesques by describing Harvey under a yew-tree at Trinity-hall, composing verses on the weathercock of Allhallows in Cambridge:—

"O thou wether-cocke that stands on the top of Allhallows,
Come thy waies down, if thou darst, for thy crowne, and take the wall on us."

"The hexameter verse (says Nash) I graunt to be a gentleman of an auncient house (so is many an English beggar), yet this clyme of our's hee cannot thrive in; our speech is too craggy for him to set his plough in; hee goes twitching and hopping in our language, like a man running vpon quagmires, vp the hill in one syllable and down the dale in another, retaining no part of that stately smooth gate which he vaunts himself with amongst the Greeks and Latins."

The most humorous part in this Scribleriad, is a ludicrous narrative of Harvey's expedition to the metropolis, for the sole purpose of writing his "Pierce's Supererogation," pitted against Nash's "Pierce Pennilesse." The facetious Nash describes the torpor and pertinacity of his genius, by telling us he had kept Harvey at work—

"For seaven and thirtie weekes space while he lay at his printer's, Wolfe, never stirring out of doors, or being churched all that while—and that in the deadest season that might bee, hee lying in the ragingest furie of the last plague where there dyde above 1600 a weeke in London, ink-squittring and saracenically printing against mee. Three quarters of a year thus immured hee remained, with his spirits yearning empassionment, and agonised fury, thirst of revenge, neglecting soul and bodies health to compasse it—sweating and dealing upon it most intentively."

The narrative proceeds with the many perils which Harvey's printer encountered, by expense of diet, and printing for this bright genius and his friends, whose works "would rust and iron-spot paper to have their names breathed over it;" and that Wolfe designed "to get a privilege betimes, forbidding of all others to sell waste-paper but himselfe." The climax of the narrative, after many misfortunes, ends with Harvey being arrested by the printer, and confined to Newgate, where "his sword is taken from him, to his perpetual disgrace." So much did Gabriel endure for having written a book against Tom Nash!

But Harvey might deny some of these ludicrous facts.—Will he deny? cries Nash—and here he has woven every tale the most watchful malice could collect, varnished for their full effect. Then he adds,

"You see I have brought the doctor out of request at court; and it shall cost me a fall, but I will get him howted out of the Vniuersitie too, ere I giue him ouer." He tells us Harvey was brought on the stage at Trinity-college, in "the exquisite comedie of Pedantius," where, under "the finical fine schoolmaster, the just manner of his phrase, they stufft his mouth with, and the whole buffianisme throughout his bookes, they bolstered out his part with—euen to the carrying of his gowne, his nice gate in his pantofles, or the affected accent of his speech—Let him deny that there was a shewe made at Clarehall of him and his brothers, called

Tarrarantantara turba tumultuosa Trigonum
Tri-Harueyorum Tri-harmonia;

and another shewe of the little minnow his brother, at Peter-house, called

Duns furens, Dick Harvey in a frensie.

Whereupon Dick came and broke the college glass windows, and Dr. Perne caused him to be set in the stockes till the shewe was ended."

This "Duns furens, Dick Harvey in a frensie," was not only the brother of one who ranked high in society and literature, but himself a learned professor. Nash brings him down to "Pigmey Dick, that lookes like a pound of goldsmiths' candles, who had like to commit folly last year with a milk-maid, as a friend of his very soberly informed me. Little and little-wittied Dick, that hath vowed to live and die in defence of Brutus and his Trojans*." An Herculean feat of this "Duns furens," Nash tells us, was his setting Aristotle with his heels upwards on the school-gates at Cambridge, and putting ass's ears on his head, which Tom here records in *perpetuam rei memoriam*. But Wood, our grave and keen literary antiquary, observes—

"To let pass other matters these vain men (the wits) report of Richard Harvey, his works show

* He had written an antiquarian work on the descent of Brutus on our island.—The party also, who at the University attacked the opinions of Aristotle, were nicknamed the *Trojans*, as determined enemies of the *Grecks*.

him quite another person than what they make him to be."

Nash then forms a ludicrous contrast between "witless Gabriel and ruffling Richard." The astronomer Richard was continually baiting the great bear in the firmament, and in his lectures set up atheistical questions, which Nash maliciously adds, "as I am afraid the earth would swallow me if I should but rehearse." And at his close, Nash bitterly regrets he has no more room; "else I should make Gabriel a fugitive out of England, being the rauenousest slouen that ever lapt porredge in noblemen's houses, where he has had already, out of two, his mittimus of Ye may be gone! for he was a sower of seditious paradoxes amongst kitchin-boys." Nash seems to have considered himself as terrible as an Archilochus, whose satires were so fatal as to induce the satirised, after having read them, to hang themselves.

How ill poor Harvey passed through these wit-duels, and how profoundly the wounds inflicted on him and his brothers were felt, appears by his own confessions. In his "Foure Letters," after some curious observations on invectives and satires, from those of Archilochus, Lucian, and Aretine, to Skelton and Scoggin, and "the whole venemous and viperous brood of old and new raylers," he proceeds to blame even his beloved friend the gentle Spenser, for the severity of his "Mother Hubbard's tale," a satire on the court. "I must needes say, Mother Hubbard in heat of choller, forgetting the pure sanguine of her Sweete Feary Queene, artfully ouershott her malcontent-selfe; as elsewhere I have specified at large, with the good leaue of vnspotted friendship.—Sallust and Clodius learned of Tully to frame artificiall declamations and patheticall invectives against Tully himselfe; if Mother Hubbard, in the vaine of Chawcer, happen to tel one canicular tale, father Elderton and his son Greene, in the vaine of Skelton or Scoggin, will counterfeit an hundred dogged fables, libles, slaunders, lies, for the whetstone. But many will sooner lose their liues than the least jott of their reputation. What mortal feudes, what cruel bloodshed, what terrible slaughterdome have been committed for the point of honour and some few courtly ceremonies."

The incidents so plentifully narrated in this Lucianic biography, the very nature of this species of satire throws into doubt; yet they still seem shadowed out from some truths; but the truths who can unravel from the fictions? And thus a narrative is consigned to posterity which involves illustrious characters in an inextricable net-work of calumny and genius.

Writers of this class alienate themselves from human kind, they break the golden bond which holds them to society; and they live among us like a polished banditti. In these copious extracts, I have not noticed the more criminal insinuations against the Harveys; I have left the grosser slanders untouched. My object has been only to trace the effects of ridicule, and to detect its artifices, by which the most dignified characters may be deeply injured at the pleasure of a Ridiculer. The wild mirth of ridicule, aggravating and taunting real imperfections, and fastening imaginary ones on the victim in idle sport or ill-humour, strikes at the most brittle thing in the world, a man's good reputation, for delicate matters which are not under the protection of the law, but in which so much of personal happiness is concerned.

LITERARY HATRED.

EXHIBITING A CONSPIRACY AGAINST AN AUTHOR.

In the peaceful walks of literature we are startled at discovering genius with the mind, and, if we conceive the instrument it guides to be a stiletto, with the hand of an assassin,—irascible, vindictive, armed with indiscriminate satire, never pardoning the merit of rival genius, but fastening on it throughout life, till, in the moral retribution of human nature, these very passions, by their ungratified cravings, have tended to annihilate the being who fostered them. These passions among literary men are with none more inextinguishable than among *provincial writers*.—Their bad feelings are concentrated by their local contraction. The proximity of men of genius seems to produce a familiarity which excites hatred or contempt; while he who is afflicted with disordered passions imagines that he is urging his own claims to genius by denying them to their possessor. A whole life passed in harassing the industry or the genius which he has not equalled; and instead of running the open career as a competitor, only skulking as an assassin by their side, is presented in the object now before us.

Dr. Gilbert Stuart seems early in life to have devoted himself to literature; but his habits were irregular, and his passions fierce. The celebrity of Robertson, Blair, and Henry, with other Scottish brothers, diseased his mind with a most envious rancour. He confined all his literary efforts to the pitiable motive of destroying theirs; he was prompted to every one of his historical works by the mere desire of discrediting some work of Robertson; and his numerous critical labours were all directed to annihilate the genius of his country. How he converted his life into its own scourge, how wasted talents he might have cultivated into perfection, lost every trace of humanity, and finally perished, devoured by his own fiend-like passions,—shall be illustrated by the follow-

ing narrative, collected from a correspondence now lying before me, which the author carried on with his publisher in London. I shall copy out at some length the hopes and disappointments of the literary adventurer—the colours are not mine; I am dipping my pencil in the pallet of the artist himself.

In June 1773 was projected in the Scottish capital "The Edinburgh Magazine and Review." Stuart's letters breathe the spirit of rapturous confidence. He had combined the sedulous attention of the intelligent Smellie, who was to be the printer, with some very honourable critics; Professor Baron, Dr. Blacklock, and Professor Richardson; and the first numbers were executed with more talent than periodical publications had then exhibited. But the hardiness of Stuart's opinions, his personal attacks, and the acrimony of his literary libels, presented a new feature in Scottish literature, of such ugliness and horror, that every honourable man soon averted his face from this *boutefeu*.

He designed to ornament his first number with—

"A print of my Lord Monboddo in his quadruped form. I must, therefore, most earnestly beg that you will purchase for me a copy of it in some of the Macaroni-print shops. It is not to be procured at Edinburgh. They are afraid to vend it here. We are to take it on the footing of a figure of an animal, not yet described; and are to give a grave, yet satirical account of it, in the manner of Buffon. It would not be proper to allude to his lordship but in a very distant manner."

It was not, however, ventured on; and the nondescript animal was still confined to the windows of "the Macaroni-print shops." It was however the bloom of the author's fancy, and promised all the mellow fruits it afterwards produced.

In September, this ardour did not abate:—

"The proposals are issued; the subscriptions in the booksellers' shops astonish; correspondents flock in; and, what will surprise you, the timid proprietors of the Scots' Magazine have come to the resolution of dropping their work. You stare at all this, and so do I too."

Thus he flatters himself he is to annihilate his rival, without even striking the first blow. The appearance of his first number is to be the moment when their last is to come forth. Authors, like the discoverers of mines, are the most sanguine creatures in the world: Gilbert Stuart afterwards flattered himself Dr. Henry was lying at the point of death from the scalping of his tomahawk pen; but of this anon.

On the publication of the first number, in November 1773, all is exultation; and an account is facetiously expected that "a thousand copies had emigrated from the Row and Fleet-street."

There is a serious composure in the letter of December, which seems to be occasioned by the tempered answer of his London correspondent. The work was more suited to the meridian of Edinburgh; and from causes sufficiently obvious, its personality and causticity. Stuart, however, assures his friend, that "the second number you will find better than the first, and the third better than the second."

The next letter is dated March 4, 1774, in which I find our author still in good spirits:—

"The magazine rises, and promises much, in this quarter. Our artillery has silenced all opposition. The rogues of the 'uplifted hands' decline the combat." These rogues are the clergy, and some others, who had "uplifted hands" from the vituperative nature of their adversary; for he tells us, that "now the clergy are silent, the town-council have had the presumption to oppose us; and have threatened Creech (the publisher in Edinburgh) with the terror of making him a constable for his insolence. A pamphlet on the abuses of Heriot's Hospital, including a direct proof of perjury in the provost, was the punishment inflicted in return. And new papers are forging to chastise them, in regard to the poor's rate, which is again started; the improper choice of professors; and violent stretches of the impost. The *liberty of the press*, in its fullest extent, is to be employed against them."

Such is the language of reform, and the spirit of a reformist! A little private malignity thus ferments a good deal of public spirit; but patriotism must be independent to be pure. If the Edinburgh Review continues to succeed in its sale, as Stuart fancies, Edinburgh itself may be in some danger. His perfect contempt of his contemporaries is amusing:—

"Monboddo's second volume is published, and, with Kaimes, will appear in our next; the former is a childish performance; the latter rather better. We are to treat them with a good deal of freedom. I observe an amazing falling off in the English Reviews. We beat them hollow. I fancy they have no assistance but from the Dissenters, a dull body of men. The Monthly will not easily recover the death of Hawkesworth; and I suspect that Langhorne has forsaken them; for I see no longer his pen."

We are now hastening to the sudden and the moral catastrophe of our tale. The thousand copies which had emigrated to London remained there, little disturbed by public inquiry; and in Scotland, the personal animosity against almost every literary character there, which had inflamed the sale, became naturally the latent cause of its

extinction; for its life was but a feverish existence, and its florid complexion carried with it the seeds of its dissolution. Stuart, at length, quarrelled with his coadjutor, Smellie, for altering his reviews. Smellie's prudential dexterity was such, that, in an article designed to level Lord Kaimes with Lord Monboddo, the whole libel was completely metamorphosed into a panegyric. They were involved in a law-suit, about "a blasphemous paper." And now the enraged Zoilus complains of "his hours of peevishness and dissatisfaction." He acknowledges, that "a circumstance had happened which had broke his peace and ease altogether for some weeks." And now he resolves that this great work shall quietly sink into a mere compilation from the London periodical works. Such, then, is the progress of malignant genius! The author, like him who invented the brazen bull of Phalaris, is writhing in that machine of tortures he had contrived for others.

We now come to a very remarkable passage: it is the frenzied language of disappointed wickedness.

"17 *June*, 1774.

"It is an infinite disappointment to me that the Magazine does not grow in London; I thought the soil had been richer. But it is my constant fate to be disappointed in everything I attempt; I do not think I ever had a wish that was gratified; and never dreaded an event that did not come. With this felicity of fate, I wonder how the devil I could turn projector. I am now sorry that I left London; and the moment that I have money enough to carry me back to it, I shall set off. *I mortally detest and abhor this place, and everybody in it.* Never was there a city where there was so much pretension to knowledge, and that had so little of it. The solemn foppery, and the gross stupidity of the Scottish literati, are perfectly insupportable. I shall drop my idea of a Scots newspaper. Nothing will do in this country that has common sense in it; only cant, hypocrisy, and superstition, will flourish here. *A curse on the country, and all the men, women, and children of it!*"

Again.—"The publication is too good for the country. There are very few men of taste or erudition on this side the Tweed. Yet every idiot one meets with lays claim to both. Yet the success of the Magazine is in reality greater than we could expect, considering that we have every clergyman in the kingdom to oppose it, and that the magistracy of the place are every moment threatening its destruction."

And, therefore, this recreant Scot anathematizes the Scottish people! for not applauding blasphemy, calumny, and every species of literary criminality. Such are the monstrous passions that swell out the poisonous breast of genius, deprived of every moral restraint; and such was the demoniac irritability which prompted a wish in Collot d'Herbois to set fire to the four quarters of the city of Lyons; while, in his "tender-mercies," the kennels of the streets were running with the blood of its inhabitants—remembering still that the Lyonese had, when he was a miserable actor, hissed him off the stage!

Stuart curses his country, and retreats to London. Fallen, but not abject; repulsed, but not altered; degraded, but still haughty. No change of place could operate any in his heart. He was born in literary crime, and he perished in it. It was now "The English Review" was instituted, with his idol Whitaker, the historian of Manchester, and others. He says, "To Whitaker he assigns the palm of history in preference to Hume and Robertson." I have heard that he considered himself higher than Whitaker, and ranked himself with Montesquieu. He negotiated for Whitaker and himself a doctor of laws' degree; and they were now in the titular possession of all the fame which a dozen pieces could bestow! In "The English Review" broke forth all the genius of Stuart in an unnatural warfare of Scotchmen in London against Scotchmen at Edinburgh. "The bitter herbs," which seasoned it against Blair, Robertson, Gibbon, and the ablest authors of the age, at first provoked the public appetite, which afterwards indignantly rejected the palatable garbage.

But to proceed with our *Literary Conspiracy*, which was conducted by Stuart, with a pertinacity of invention, perhaps not to be paralleled in literary history. That the peace of mind of such an industrious author as Dr. Henry was for a considerable time destroyed—that the sale of a work on which Henry had expended much of his fortune and his life was stopped; and that, when covered with obloquy and ridicule, in despair he left Edinburgh for London, still encountering the same hostility; that all this was the work of the same hand—perhaps was never even known to its victim. The multiplied forms of this Proteus of the Malevoli were still but one devil; fire or water, or a bull or a lion; still it was the same Proteus, the same Stuart.

From the correspondence before me, I am enabled to collect the commencement and the end of this literary conspiracy, with all its intermediate links. It thus commences:

"25 *Nov.* 1773.

"We have been attacked from different quarters, and Dr. Henry in particular has given a long and a dull defence of his sermon. I have replied to it, with a degree of spirit altogether unknown in this country. The reverend historian was perfectly

astonished; and has actually invited the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge to arm in his cause! I am about to be persecuted by the whole clergy, and I am about to persecute them in my turn. They are hot and zealous; I am cool and dispassionate, like a determined sceptic; since I have entered the lists, I must fight; I must gain the victory, or perish like a man."

"13 *Dec.* 1773.

"David Hume wants to review Henry; but that task is so precious that I will undertake it myself. Moses, were he to ask it as a favour, should not have it; yea, not even the man after God's own heart."

"4 *March*, 1774.

"This month Henry is utterly demolished; his sale is stopped, many of his copies are returned; and his old friends have forsaken him; pray in what state is he in London? Henry has delayed his London journey; you cannot easily conceive how exceedingly he is humbled *.

"I wish I could transport myself to London to review him for the Monthly. A fire there, and in the Critical, would perfectly annihilate him. Could you do nothing in the latter? To the former I suppose David Hume has transcribed the criticism he intended for us. It is precious, and would divert you. I keep a proof of it in my cabinet for the amusement of friends. This great philosopher begins to dote†."

Stuart prepares to assail Henry, on his arrival in London, from various quarters—to lower the value of his history in the estimation of the purchasers.

"21 *March*, 1774.

"To-morrow morning Henry sets off for London, with immense hopes of selling his history. I wish he had delayed till our last review of him had reached your city. But I really suppose that he has little probability of getting any gratuity. The trade are too sharp to give precious gold for perfect nonsense. I wish sincerely that I could enter Holborn the same hour with him. He should have a repeated fire to combat with. I entreat that you may be so kind as to let him feel some of your thunder. I shall never forget the favour. If Whitaker is in London, he could give a blow. Paterson will give him a knock. Strike by all means. The wretch will tremble, grow pale, and return with a consciousness of his debility. I entreat I may hear from you a day or two after you have seen him. He will complain grievously of me to Strahan and Rose. I shall send you a paper about him; an advertisement from Parnassus, in the manner of Boccalini."

"*March*, 1774.

"Dr. Henry has by this time reached you. I think you ought to pay your respects to him in the Morning Chronicle. If you would only transcribe his jests, it would make him perfectly ridiculous. See for example, what he says of St. Dunstan. A word to the wise."

"*March* 27, 1774.

"I have a thousand thanks to give you for your insertion of the paper in the London Chronicle; and for the part you propose to act in regard to Henry. I could wish that you knew for certain his being in London before you strike the first blow. An inquiry at Cadell's will give this. When you have an enemy to attack, I shall in return give my best assistance, and aim at him a mortal blow, and rush forward to his overthrow, though the flames of hell should start up to oppose me.

"It pleases me, beyond what I can express, that Whitaker has an equal contempt for Henry. The idiot threatened, when he left Edinburgh, that he would find a method to manage the Reviews, and that he would oppose their panegyric to our censure. Hume has behaved ill in the affair, and I am preparing to chastise him. You may expect a series of papers in the magazine, pointing out a multitude of his errors, and ascertaining his ignorance of English history. It was too much for my temper to be assailed both by infidels and believers. My pride could not submit to it. I shall act in my defence with a spirit which it seems they have not expected."

"11 *April*, 1774.

"I received, with infinite pleasure, the annunciation of the great man into the capital. It is forcible and excellent; and you have my best

* It may be curious to present Stuart's idea of the literary talents of Henry. Henry's unhappy turn for humour, and a style little accordant with historical dignity, lie fairly open to the critic's animadversion. But the research and application of the writer, for that day, were considerable, and are still appreciated. But we are told that "he neither furnishes entertainment nor instruction. Diffuse, vulgar, and ungrammatical, he strips history of all her ornaments. As an antiquary, he wants accuracy and knowledge; and, as an historian, he is destitute of fire, taste, and sentiment. His work is a gazette, in which we find actions and events, without their causes; and in which we meet with the names, without the characters of personages.—He has amassed all the refuse and lumber of the times he would record." Stuart never imagined that the time would arrive, when the name of Henry would be familiar to English readers, and by many that of Stuart would not be recollected.

† The critique on Henry, in the Monthly Review, was written by Hume—and, because the philosopher was candid, he is here said to have doted.

thanks for it. You improve amazingly. The poor creature will be stupified with amazement. Inclosed is a paper for him. Boccalini will follow. I shall fall upon a method to let David know Henry's transaction about his review. It is mean to the last degree. But what could one expect from the most ignorant and the most contemptible man alive? Do you ever see Macfarlane? He owes me a favour for his history of George III., and would give a fire for the packet. The idiot is to be moderator for the ensuing assembly. It shall not, however, be without opposition.

"Would the paragraph about him from the inclosed leaf of the Edinburgh Review be any disgrace to the Morning Chronicle?"

"20*th May*, 1774.

"Boccalini I thought of transmitting, when the reverend historian, for whose use it was intended, made his appearance at Edinburgh. But it will not be lost. He shall most certainly see it. David's critique was most acceptable. It is a curious specimen in one view of insolent vanity, and in another of contemptible meanness. The old historian begins to dote, and the new one was never out of dotage."

"3 *April*, 1775.

"I see every day that what is written to a man's disparagement is never forgot nor forgiven. Poor Henry is on the point of death, and his friends declare that I have killed him. I received the information as a compliment, and begged they would not do me so much honour."

But Henry and his history long survived Stuart and his *critiques;* and Robertson, Blair, and Kaimes, with others he assailed, have all taken their due ranks in public esteem. What niche does Stuart occupy? His historical works possess the show, without the solidity, of research; hardy paradoxes, and an artificial style of momentary brilliancy, are none of the lasting materials of history. This shadow of "Montesquieu," for he conceived him only to be his fit rival, derived the last consolations of life from an obscure corner of a Burton ale-house—there, in rival potations, with two or three other disappointed authors, they regaled themselves on ale they could not always pay for, and recorded their own literary celebrity, which had never taken place. Some time before his death, his asperity was almost softened by melancholy; with a broken spirit, he reviewed himself; a victim to that unrighteous ambition which sought to build up its greatness with the ruins of his fellow-countrymen; prematurely wasting talents which might have been directed to literary eminence. And Gilbert Stuart died as he had lived, a victim to intemperance, physical and moral!

UNDUE SEVERITY OF CRITICISM.

DR. KENRICK.—SCOTT OF AMWELL.

We have witnessed the malignant influence of illiberal criticism, not only on literary men, but over literature itself, since it is the actual cause of suppressing works which lie neglected, though completed by their authors. The arts of literary condemnation, as they may be practised by men of wit and arrogance, are well known; and it is much less difficult than it is criminal, to scare the modest man of learning, and to rack the man of genius, in that bright vision of authorship sometimes indulged in the calm of their studies;—a generous emotion to inspire a generous purpose! With suppressed indignation, shrinking from the press, such have condemned themselves to a Carthusian silence; but the public will gain as little by silent authors as by a community of lazy monks; or a choir of singers who insist they have lost their voice. That undue severity of criticism which diminishes the number of good authors, is a greater calamity than even that mawkish panegyric, which may invite indifferent ones; for the truth is, a bad book produces no great evil in literature; it dies soon, and naturally; and the feeble birth only disappoints its unlucky parent, with a score of idlers, who are the dupes of their rage after novelty. A bad book never sells unless it be addressed to the passions, and, in that case, the severest criticism will never impede its circulation; malignity and curiosity being passions so much stronger and less delicate than taste or truth.

And who are the authors marked out for attack? Scarcely one of the populace of scribblers; for wit will not lose one silver shaft on game which, struck, no one would take up. It must level at the Historian, whose novel researches throw a light in the depths of antiquity; at the Poet, who, addressing himself to the imagination, perishes if that sole avenue to the heart be closed on him. Such are those who receive the criticism which has sent some nervous authors to their graves, and embittered the life of many whose talents we all regard *.

* So sensible was even the calm Newton to critical attacks, that Whiston tells us he lost his favour, which he had enjoyed for twenty years, for contradicting Newton in his old age; for no man was of "a more fearful temper." Whiston declares that he would not have thought proper to have published his work against Newton's Chronology in his lifetime, "because I knew his temper so well, that I should have expected it would have killed him; as Dr. Bentley, Bishop Stillingfleet's chaplain, told me, that he believed Mr. Locke's thorough confutation of the Bishop's metaphysics about the Trinity hastened his end." Pope

But this species of criticism, though ungenial and nipping at first, does not always kill the tree which it has frozen over.

In the calamity before us, Time, that great autocrat, who in its tremendous march destroys authors, also annihilates critics; and acting in this instance with a new kind of benevolence, takes up some who have been violently thrown down, and fixes them in their proper place; and daily enfeebling unjust criticism, has restored an injured author to his full honours.

It is, however, lamentable enough that authors must participate in that courage which faces the cannon's mouth, or cease to be authors; for military enterprise is not the taste of modest, retired, and timorous characters. The late Mr. Cumberland used to say, that authors must not be thin-skinned, but shelled like the rhinoceros; there are, however, more delicately tempered animals among them, new-born lambs, who shudder at a touch, and die under a pressure.

As for those great authors (though the greatest shrink from ridicule) who still retain public favour, they must be patient, proud, and fearless—patient of that obloquy which still will stain their honour from literary echoers; proud, while they are sensible that their literary offspring is not

> "Deformed, unfinished, sent before its time
> Into this breathing world, scarce half made up."

And fearless of all critics, when they recollect the reply of Bentley to one who threatened to write him down, "that no author was ever written down but by himself."

An author must consider himself as an arrow shot into the world; his impulse must be stronger than the current of air that carries him on—else he fall!

The character I had proposed to illustrate this calamity was the caustic Dr. KENRICK, who, once during several years, was, in his "London Review," one of the great disturbers of literary repose. The turn of his criticism; the airiness, or the asperity of his sarcasm; the arrogance with which he treated some of our great authors, would prove very amusing; and serve to display a certain talent of criticism. The life of Kenrick too would have afforded some wholesome instruction concerning the morality of a critic. But the rich materials are not at hand! He was a man of talents, who ran a race with the press; could criticise all the genius of the age faster than it was produced; could make his own malignity look like wit, and turn the wit of others into absurdity, by placing it topsy-turvy. As thus, when he attacked "The Traveller" of Goldsmith, which he called "a flimsy poem," he discussed the subject as a grave, political pamphlet, condemning the whole system, as raised on false principles. "The Deserted Village" was sneeringly pronounced to be "pretty;" but then it had "neither fancy, dignity, genius, or fire." When he reviewed Johnson's "Tour to the Hebrides," he decrees that the whole book was written "by one who had seen but little," and, therefore, could not be very interesting. His virulent attack on Johnson's Shakespeare may be preserved for its total want of literary decency; and his "Love in the Suds, a town eclogue," where he has placed Garrick with an infamous character, may be useful to show how far witty malignity will advance in the violation of moral decency. He libelled all the genius of the age, and was proud of doing it*. Johnson and Akenside preserved a stern silence: but poor Goldsmith, the child of Nature, could not resist attempting to execute martial law, by caning the critic; for which being blamed, he published a defence of himself in the papers. I shall transcribe his feelings on Kenrick's excessive and illiberal criticism.

"The law gives us no protection against this injury. The insults we receive before the public, by being more open, are the more distressing; by treating them with silent contempt, we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress, we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us. In short, every man should singly consider himself as a guardian of the liberty of the press, and as far as his influence can extend, should endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom."

Here then is another calamity arising from the calamity of undue severity of criticism, which authors bring on themselves by their excessive anxiety, which throws them into some extremely ridiculous attitudes; and surprisingly influence even authors of good sense and temper. SCOTT of Amwell, the Quaker and Poet, was, doubtless, a modest and amiable man, for Johnson declared "he loved him." When his poems were collected, they were reviewed in the Critical Review; very offensively to the Poet; for the critic, alluding to the numerous embellishments of the volume, observed, that

writhed in his chair from the light shafts which Cibber darted on him; yet they were not tipped with the poison of the Java-tree. Dr. Hawkesworth *died of criticism*.—Singing-birds cannot live in a storm.

* In one of his own publications he quotes, with great self-complacency, the following lines on himself:

> "The wits who drink water and suck sugar-candy,
> Impute the strong spirit of Kenrick to brandy:
> They are not so much out; the matter in short is,
> He sips *aqua-vitæ* and spits *aqua-fortis*."

"There is a profusion of ornaments and finery about this book, not quite suitable to the plainness and simplicity of the Barclean system; but Mr. Scott is fond of the Muses, and wishes, we suppose, like Captain Macheath, to see his ladies well dressed."

Such was the cold affected witticism of the critic, whom I intimately knew—and I believe he meant little harm! His friends imagined even that this was the solitary attempt at wit he had ever made in his life; for after a lapse of years, he would still recur to it as an evidence of the felicity of his fancy, and the keenness of his satire. The truth is, he was a physician, whose name is prefixed as the editor to a great medical compilation, and who never pretended that he had any taste for poetry. His great art of poetical criticism was always, as Pope expresses a character, "to dwell in decencies;" his acumen, to detect that terrible poetic crime false rhymes, and to employ indefinite terms, which, as they had no precise meaning, were applicable to all things; to commend, occasionally, a passage not always the most exquisite; sometimes to hesitate, while, with delightful candour, he seemed to give up his opinion; to hazard sometimes a positive condemnation on parts which often unluckily proved the most favourite with the poet and the reader. Such was this poetical reviewer, whom no one disturbed in his periodical course, till the circumstance of a plain quaker becoming a poet, and fluttering in the finical ornaments of his book, provoked him from that calm state of innocent mediocrity, into miserable humour, and illiberal criticism.

The effect, however, this pert criticism had on poor Scott was indeed a calamity. It produced an inconsiderate "Letter to the Critical Reviewers." Scott was justly offended at the stigma of quakerism, applied to the author of a literary composition; but too gravely accuses the critic of his scurrilous allusion to Macheath, as comparing him to a highwayman; he seems, however, more provoked at the odd account of his poems; he says, "You rank all my poems together as *bad*, then discriminate some as *good*, and, to complete all, recommend the volume as *an agreeable and amusing collection*." Had the poet been personally acquainted with this tantalizing critic, he would have comprehended the nature of the criticism—and certainly would never have replied to it.

The critic, employing one of his indefinite terms, had said of "Amwell," and some of the early "Elegies," that "they had their share of poetical merit;" he does not venture to assign the proportion of that share, but "the Amœbean and oriental eclogues, odes, epistles, &c. now added, are *of a much weaker feature, and many of them incorrect*."

Here Scott loses all his dignity as a quaker and a poet—he asks what the critic means by the affected phrase *much weaker feature*; the style, he says, was designed to be somewhat less elevated; and thus addresses the critic:—

"You may, however, be safely defied to pronounce them, with truth, deficient either in strength, or melody of versification! They were designed to be, like Virgil's, descriptive of Nature, simple and correct. Had you been disposed to do me justice, you might have observed that in these eclogues I had drawn from the great prototype Nature, much imagery that had escaped the notice of all my predecessors. You might also have remarked, that when I introduced images that had been already introduced by others, still the arrangement or combination of those images was my own. The praise of originality you might at least have allowed me."

As for their *incorrectness!*—Scott points that accusation with a note of admiration, adding, "with whatever defects my works may be chargeable, the last is that of *incorrectness*."

We are here involuntarily reminded of Sir Fretful, in "The Critic:"—

"I think the interest rather declines in the fourth act."

"Rises! you mean, my dear friend!"

Perhaps the most extraordinary examples of the irritation of a poet's mind, and a man of amiable temper, are those parts of this letter in which the author quotes large portions of his poetry, to refute the degrading strictures of the reviewer.

This was a fertile principle, admitting of very copious extracts; but the ludicrous attitude is that of an Adonis inspecting himself at his mirror.

That provoking see-saw of criticism, which our learned physician usually adopted in his critiques, was particularly tantalizing to the poet of Amwell. The critic condemns, in the gross, a whole set of eclogues; but immediately asserts of one of them, that "the whole of it has great poetical merit, and paints its subject in the warmest colours." When he came to review the odes, he discovers that "he does not meet with those polished numbers, nor that freedom and spirit, which that species of poetry requires;" and quotes half a stanza, which he declares is "abrupt and insipid." "From twenty-seven odes!" exclaims the writhing poet—"are the whole of my lyric productions to be stigmatised for four lines which are flatter than those that preceded them?" But what the critic could not be aware of, the poet tells us—he designed them to be just what they are. "I knew they were so, when they were first written; but they were thought sufficiently elevated for the place." And then he enters into an inquiry what the

critic can mean by "polished numbers, freedom, and spirit." The passage is curious:—

"By your first criticism, *polished numbers*, if you mean melodious versification, this perhaps the general ear will not deny me. If you mean classical, chaste diction, free from tautologous repetitions of the same thoughts in different expressions; free from bad rhymes, unnecessary epithets, and incongruous metaphors; I believe you may be safely challenged to produce many instances wherein I have failed.

"By *freedom*, your second criterion, if you mean daring transition, or arbitrary and desultory disposition of ideas, however this may be required in the greater ode, it is now, I believe, for the first time, expected in the lesser ode. If you mean that careless, diffuse composition, that conversation-verse, or verse loitering into prose, now so fashionable, this is an excellence which I am not very ambitious of attaining. But if you mean strong, concise, yet natural easy expression, I apprehend the general judgment will decide in my favour. To the general ear, and the general judgment, then do I appeal, as to an impartial tribunal." Here several odes are transcribed. "By *spirit*, your third criticism, I know nothing you can mean but enthusiasm; that which transports us to every scene, and interests us in every sentiment. Poetry without this cannot subsist; every species demands its proportion, from the greater ode, of which it is the principal characteristic, to the lesser, in which a small portion of it only has hitherto been thought requisite. My productions, I apprehend, have never before been deemed destitute of this essential constituent. Whatever I have wrote, I have felt, and I believe others have felt it also."

On "the epistles," which had been condemned in the gross, suddenly the critic turns round courteously to the bard, declaring "they are written in an easy and familiar style, and seem to flow from a good and a benevolent heart." But then sneeringly adds, that one of them being entitled "An Essay on Painting, addressed to a young Artist, had better have been omitted, because it had been so fully treated in so masterly a manner by Mr. Hayley." This was letting fall a spark in a barrel of gunpowder. Scott immediately analyses his brother poet's poem, to show they have nothing in common; and then compares those similar passages the subject naturally produced, to show that "his poem does not suffer greatly in the comparison." "You may," he adds, after giving copious extracts from both poems, "persist in saying that Mr. Hayley's are the best. Your business then is to prove it." This, indeed, had been a very hazardous affair for our medical critic, acknowledges "Mr. Scott's poem is just and elegant," but "Mr. Hayley's is likewise just and elegant;" therefore, if one man has written a piece "just and elegant," there is no need of another on the same subject "just and elegant."

To such an extreme point of egotism was a modest and respectable author most cruelly driven, by the callous playfulness of a poetical critic, who himself had no sympathy for poetry of any quality or any species, and whose sole art consisted in turning about the canting dictionary of criticism. Had Homer been a modern candidate for poetical honours, from him Homer had not been distinguished, even from the mediocrity of Scott of Amwell, whose poetical merits are not, however, slight. In his Amœbean eclogues, he may be distinguished as the poet of botanists.

A VOLUMINOUS AUTHOR WITHOUT JUDGMENT.

VAST erudition, without the tact of good sense, in a voluminous author, what a calamity! for to such a mind no subject can present itself on which he is unprepared to write, and none at the same time on which he can ever write reasonably. The name and the works of WILLIAM PRYNNE have often come under the eye of the reader; but it is even now difficult to discover his real character: for Prynne stood so completely insulated amid all parties, that he was ridiculed by his friends, and execrated by his enemies. The exuberance of his fertile pen, the strangeness and the manner of his subjects, and his pertinacity in voluminous publication, are known, and are nearly unparalleled in literary history.

Could the man himself be separated from the author, Prynne would not appear ridiculous; but the unlucky author of nearly two hundred works*,

* That all these works should not be wanting to posterity, Prynne deposited the complete collection in the library of Lincoln's Inn, about forty volumes in folio and quarto. Noy, the Attorney-General, Prynne's great adversary, was provoked at the society's acceptance of these ponderous volumes, and promised to send them the voluminous labours of Taylor the water-poet, to place by their side; he judged, as Wood says, that "Prynne's books were worth little or nothing; that his proofs were no arguments, and his affirmations no testimonies." But honest Anthony, in spite of his prejudices against Prynne, confesses, that though "by the generality of scholars they are looked upon to be rather rhapsodical and confused, than polite or concise; yet, for Antiquaries, Critics, and sometimes for Divines, they are useful." Such erudition as Prynne's always retains its value—the author who could quote a hundred authors on "the unloveliness of love-locks," will always make a good literary chest of drawers, well filled, for those who can make better use of

and who, as Wood quaintly computes, "must have written a sheet every day of his life, reckoning from the time that he came to the use of reason and the state of man," has involved his life in his authorship; the greatness of his character loses itself in his voluminous works; and whatever Prynne may have been in his own age, and remains to posterity, he was fated to endure all the calamities of an author who has strained learning into absurdity, and abused zealous industry by chimerical speculation.

Yet his activity, and the firmness and intrepidity of his character in public life, were as ardent as they were in his study—his soul was Roman; and Eachard says, that Charles II., who could not but admire his earnest honesty, his copious learning, and the public persecutions he suffered, and the ten imprisonments he endured, inflicted by all parties, dignified him with the title of "the Cato of the Age;" and one of his own party facetiously described him as "William the Conqueror," a title he had most hardly earned by his inflexible and invincible nature. Twice he had been cropped of his ears; for at the first time the executioner having spared the two fragments, the inhuman judge on his second trial discovering them with astonishment, ordered them to be most unmercifully cropped—then he was burned on his cheek, and ruinously fined, and imprisoned in a remote solitude*,—but had they torn him limb by limb, Prynne had been in his mind a very polypus, which cut into pieces, still loses none of its individuality.

His conduct on the last of these occasions, when sentenced to be stigmatised, and to have his ears cut close, must be noticed. Turning to the executioner, he calmly invited him to do his duty—"Come, friend, come, burn me! cut me! I fear not! I have learned to fear the fire of hell, and not what man can do unto me; come, scar me! scar me!" In Prynne this was not ferocity, but heroism; Bastwick was intrepid out of spite, and Burton from fanaticism. The executioner had been urged not to spare his victims; and he performed his office with extraordinary severity, cruelly heating his iron twice, and cutting one of Prynne's ears so close, as to take away a piece of the cheek. Prynne stirred not in the torture; and when it was done, smiled, observing, "The more I am beaten down, the more I am lift up." After this punishment, in going to the Tower by water, he composed the following verses on the two letters branded on his cheek, S. L. for schismatical libeller, but which Prynne chose to translate "Stigmata Laudis," the stigmas of his enemy, the Archbishop Laud.

"Stigmata maxillis referens insignia LAUDIS,
Exultans remeo, victima grata Deo."

The heroic man, who could endure agony and insult, and even thus commemorate his sufferings, with no unpoetical conception, almost degrades his own sublimity when the poetaster sets our teeth on edge by his verse.

"Bearing Laud's stamps on my cheeks I retire
Triumphing, God's sweet sacrifice by fire."

The triumph of this unconquered being was, indeed, signal. History scarcely exhibits so wonderful a reverse of fortune, and so strict a retribution, as occurred at this eventful period. He, who had borne from the archbishop, and the lords in the Star Chamber, the most virulent invectives,

+ Prynne seems to have considered being debarred from pen, ink, and books, as an act more barbarous than the loss of his ears. See his curious book of "A New Discovery of the Prelate's Tyranny; it is a complete collection of everything relating to Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton; three political fanatics, who seem impatiently to have courted the fate of Marsyas. Prynne in his voluminous argument, proving the illegality of the sentences he had suffered, in his ninth point thus gives way to all the feelings of Martinus Scriblerus:—"Point 9th, that the prohibiting of me pen, ink, paper, and books, is against law." He employs an argument to prove that the abuse of any lawful thing never takes away the use of it; therefore the law does not deprive gluttons or drunkards of necessary meat and drink; this analogy he applies to his pen, ink, and books, of which they could not deprive him, though they might punish him for their abuse. He asserts that the popish prelates, in the reign of Mary, were the first who invented this new torture of depriving a scribbler of pen and ink. He quotes a long passage from Ovid's Tristia, to prove, that though exiled to the Isle of Pontus for his wanton books of love, pen and ink were not denied him to compose new poems; that St. John, banished to the Isle of Patmos by the persecuting Domitian, still was allowed pen and ink, for there he wrote the Revelation—and he proceeds with similar facts. Prynne's books abound with uncommon facts on common topics, for he had no discernment; and he seems to have written to convince himself, and not the public.

But to show the extraordinary perseverance of Prynne in his love of scribbling, I transcribe the following title of one of his extraordinary works. He published "Comfortable cordials against discomfortable fears of Imprisonment, containing some Latin verses, sentences and texts of Scripture, *written by Mr. Wm. Prynne on his chamber-walls in* the Tower of London during his imprisonment there; translated by him into English verse, 1641. Prynne literally verifies Pope's description—

"Is there who lock'd from ink and paper, scrawls
With desperate charcoal round his darken'd walls?"

We have also a catalogue of printed books written by Wm. Prynne, of Lincoln's-Inn, Esq., in these classes—

Before / During / Since } his imprisonment, with the motto *Jucundi acti labores.* 1643.

wishing them at that instant seriously to consider that some who sat there on the bench might yet stand prisoners at the bar, and need the favour they now denied—at length saw the prediction completely verified. What were the feelings of Laud, when Prynne, returning from his prison of Mount Orgueil, in triumph, the road strewed with boughs, amid the acclamations of the people—entered the apartment in the Tower which the venerable Laud now in his turn occupied. The unsparing Puritan sternly performed the office of rifling his papers*, and persecuted the helpless prelate till he led him to the block. Prynne, to use his own words, for he could be eloquent when moved by passion, "had struck proud Canterbury to the heart; and had undermined all his prelatical designs to advance the bishops' pomp and power†;" Prynne triumphed—but, even this austere Puritan soon grieved over the calamities he had contributed to inflict on the nation; and, with a humane feeling, he once wished, that "when they had cut off his ears, they had cut off his head." He closed his political existence by becoming an advocate for the Restoration; but, with his accustomed want of judgment, and intemperate zeal, had nearly injured the cause by his premature activity. At the Restoration some difficulty occurred to dispose of "busie Mr. Pryn," as Whitelocke calls him. It is said he wished to be one of the Barons of the Exchequer, but he was made the Keeper of the Records in the Tower, "purposely to employ his head from scribbling against the state and bishops;" where they put him to clear the Augean stable of our national antiquities, and see whether they could weary out his restless vigour. Prynne had, indeed, written till he found no antagonist would reply; and now he rioted in leafy folios, and proved himself to be one of the greatest paper-worms which ever crept into old books and mouldy records.

The literary character of Prynne is described by the happy epithet which Anthony Wood applies to him, "Voluminous Prynne." His great characteristic is opposed to that axiom of Hesiod so often quoted, that "half is better than the whole;" a secret which the matter-of-fact-men rarely discover. Wanting judgment, and the tact of good sense, these detailers have no power of selection from their stores, to make one prominent fact represent the hundred minuter ones that may follow it. Voluminously feeble, they imagine expansion is stronger than compression; and know not to generalise, while they only can deal in particulars. Prynne's speeches were just as voluminous as his writings; always deficient in judgment, and abounding in knowledge—he was always

* The interesting particulars of this interview have been preserved by the Archbishop himself—and it is curious to observe how Laud could now utter the same tones of murmur and grief to which Prynne himself had recently given way. Studied insult in these cases accompanies power in the hands of a faction. I collect these particulars from "The History of the Troubles and Tryal of Archbishop Laud," and refer to Vicars's "God in the Mount, or a Parliamentarie Chronicle," p. 344, for the Puritanic triumphs.

"My implacable enemy, Mr. Pryn, was picked out as a man whose malice might be trusted to make the search upon me, and he did it exactly. The manner of the search upon me was thus: Mr. Pryn came into the Tower so soon as the gates were open—commanded the Warder to open my door—he came into my chamber, and found me in bed—Mr. Pryn, seeing me safe in bed, falls first to my pockets to rifle them—it was expressed in the warrant that he should search my pockets. Did they remember, when they gave this warrant, how odious it was to Parliaments, and some of themselves, to have the pockets of men searched? I rose, got my gown upon my shoulders, and he held me in the search till past nine in the morning (he had come in betimes in the morning in the month of May). He took from me twenty-one bundles of papers, which I had prepared for my defence, &c., a little book or diary, containing all the occurrences of my life, and my book of private devotions; both written with my own hand. Nor could I get him to leave this last; he must needs see what passed between God and me. The last place he rifled was a trunk which stood by my bed-side; in that he found nothing but about forty pounds in money, for my necessary expenses, which he meddled not with, and a bundle of some gloves. This bundle he was so careful to open, as that he caused each glove to be looked into; upon this I tendered him one pair of the gloves, which he refusing, I told him he might take them, and fear no bribe, for he had already done me all the mischief he could, and I asked no favour of him; so he thanked me, took the gloves, and bound up my papers and went his way."—Prynne had a good deal of *cunning* in his character, as well as fortitude. He had all the subterfuges and quirks which, perhaps, form too strong a feature in the character of "an utter Barrister of Lincoln's Inn." His great artifice was secretly printing extracts from the diary of Laud, and placing a copy in the hands of every member of the House, which was a sudden stroke on the Archbishop, when at the bar, that at the moment overcame him. Once when Prynne was printing one of his libels, he attempted to deny being the author, and ran to the printing-house to distribute the forms, but it was proved he had corrected the proof and the revise. Another time, when he had written a libellous letter to the Archbishop, Noy, the attorney-general, sent for Prynne from his prison, and demanded of him whether the letter was of his own hand-writing. Prynne said he must see and read the letter before he could determine; and when Noy gave it to him, Prynne tore it to pieces, and threw the fragments out of the window, that it might not be brought in evidence against him. Noy had preserved a copy, but that did not avail him, as Prynne well knew that the misdemeanor was in the letter itself; and Noy gave up the prosecution, as there was now no remedy.

† Breviate of the Bishop's intolerable usurpations, p. 35.

wearying others, but never could himself. He once made a speech to the House, to persuade them the king's concessions were sufficient ground for a treaty; it contains a complete narrative of all the transactions between the king, the Houses, and the army, from the beginning of the parliament; it takes up 140 octavo pages, and kept the house so long together, that the debates lasted from Monday morning till Tuesday morning!

Prynne's literary character may be illustrated by his singular book, "Histriomastix,"—where we observe how an author's exuberant learning, like corn heaped in a granary, grows rank and musty, by a want of power to ventilate and stir about the heavy mass.

This paper-worm may first be viewed in his study, as painted by the picturesque Anthony Wood; an artist in the Flemish school:—

"His custom, when he studied, was to put on a long quilted cap, which came an inch over his eyes, serving as an umbrella to defend them from too much light, and *seldom eating any dinner*, would be every three hours maunching a roll of bread, and now and then refresh his exhausted spirits with ale brought to him by his servant;" a custom to which Butler alludes,

> "Thou that with ale, or viler liquors,
> Didst inspire Withers, Prynne, and Vicars,
> And teach, though it were in despite
> Of nature and their stars to write."

The "HISTRIOMASTIX, the Player's Scourge, or Actor's Tragedie," is a ponderous quarto, ascending to about 1100 pages; a Puritan's invective against plays and players, accusing them of every kind of crime, including libels against church and state*; but it is more remarkable for the incalculable quotations and references foaming over the margins. Prynne scarcely ventures on the most trivial opinion, without calling to his aid whatever had been said in all nations and in all ages; and Cicero and Master Stubbs, Petrarch and Minutius Felix, Isaiah and Froissart's Chronicle, oddly associate in the ravings of erudition. Who, indeed, but the author "who seldom dined," could have quoted perhaps a thousand writers in one volume†? A wit of the times remarked of this *Helluo librorum*, that "Nature makes ever the dullest beasts most laborious, and the greatest feeders;" and Prynne has been reproached with a weak digestion, for "returning things unaltered, which is a symptom of a feeble stomach."

When we examine this volume, often alluded to, the birth of the monster seems prodigious and mysterious; it combines two opposite qualities; it is so elaborate in its researches among the thousand authors quoted, that these required years to accumulate, and yet the matter is often temporary, and levelled at fugitive events and particular persons; thus the very formation of this mighty volume seems paradoxical. The secret history of this book is as extraordinary as the book itself, and is a remarkable evidence how, in a work of immense erudition, the arts of a wily sage involved himself, and whoever was concerned in his book, in total ruin. The author was pilloried, fined, and imprisoned; his publisher condemned in the penalty of five hundred pounds, and barred for ever from printing and selling books, and the licenser removed and punished. Such was the fatality attending the book of a man whose literary voracity produced one of the most tremendous indigestions, in a malady of writing.

It was on examining Prynne's trial I discovered the secret history of the "Histriomastix." Prynne was seven years in writing this work, and, what is almost incredible, it was near four years passing through the press. During that interval the eternal scribbler was daily gorging himself with voluminous food, and daily fattening his cooped-up capon. The temporary sedition and libels were the gradual Mosaic inlayings through this shapeless mass.

It appears that the volume of 1100 quarto pages originally consisted of little more than a quire of paper; but Prynne found insuperable difficulties in procuring a licenser, even for this infant Hercules. Dr. Goode deposed that—

"About eight years ago Mr. Prynne brought to him a quire of paper to license, which he refused; and he recollected the circumstance by having held an argument with Prynne on his severe reprehension on the unlawfulness of a man to put on women's apparel, which, the good-humoured doctor asserted was not always unlawful; for suppose Mr. Prynne yourself, as a Christian, was persecuted by pagans, think you not if you disguised yourself in your maid's apparel, you did well? Prynne sternly answered that he thought himself bound rather to yield to death than to do so."

Another licenser, Dr. Harris, deposed, that about seven years ago—

"Mr. Prynne came to him to license a treatise concerning stage-plays; but he would not allow of the same;"—and adds, "So this man did deliver this book when it was young and tender, and

* Hume, in his History, has given some account of this enormous quarto; to which I refer the reader, vol. vi. chap. lii.

† Milton admirably characterises Prynne's absurd learning, as well as his character, in his treatise on "The likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the church," as "a late hot querist for tythes, whom ye may know by *his wife lying ever beside him in the margin, to be ever beside his wife in the text.* A fierce Reformer once; now rankled with a contrary heat."

would have had it then printed; but it is since grown seven times bigger, and seven times worse."

Prynne not being able to procure these licensers, had recourse to another, Buckner, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was usual for the licenser to examine the MS. before it went to the press; but Prynne either tampered with Buckner, or so confused his intellects by keeping his multifarious volume in the press for four years; and sometimes, I suspect, by numbering folios for pages, as appears in the work, that the examination of the licenser gradually relaxed; and he declares in his defence that he had only licensed part of it. The bookseller, Sparks, was, indeed, a noted publisher of what was then called "Unlawful and unlicensed books;" and he had declared that it was "an excellent book, which would be called in, and then sell well." He confesses the book had been more than three years in the press, and had cost him three hundred pounds.

The speech of Noy, the attorney-general, conveys some notion of the work itself; sufficiently curious as giving the feelings of those times against the Puritans.

"Who he means by his *modern innovators* in the church, and by *cringing and ducking* to altars, a fit term to bestow on the church; he learned it of the *canters*, being used among them. The musick in the church, the charitable term he giveth it, is not to be a noise of men, but rather a *bleating of brute beasts*; choristers *bellow* the tenor, as it were oxen; *bark* a counterpoint as a kennel of dogs; *roar* out a treble like a sort of bulls; *grunt* out a bass, as it were a number of hogs. Bishops he calls the *silk and satin divines*; says Christ was a Puritan, in his Index. He falleth on those things that have not relation to stage-plays, musick in the church, dancing, new-years' gifts, &c.—then upon altars, images, hair of men and women, bishops and bonfires. Cards and tables do offend him, and perukes do fall within the compass of his theme. His end is to persuade the people that we are returning back again to paganism, and to persuade them to go and serve God in another country, as many are gone already, and set up new laws and fancies among themselves. Consider what may come of it!"

The decision of the Lords of the Star-chamber was dictated by passion as much as justice. Its severity exceeded the crime of having produced an unreadable volume of indigested erudition; and the learned scribbler was too hardly used, scarcely escaping with life. Lord Cottington, amazed at the mighty volume, too bluntly affirmed that Prynne did not write this book alone; "he either assisted the devil, or was assisted by the devil." But secretary Cooke delivered a sensible and temperate speech; remarking on all its false erudition, that, "By this vast book of Mr. Prynne's, it appeareth that he hath read more than he hath studied, and studied more than he hath considered. He calleth his book 'Histriomastix;' but therein he showeth himself like unto Ajax Anthropomastix, as the Grecians called him, the scourge of all mankind, that is, the whipper and the whip."

Such is the history of a man whose greatness of character was clouded over and lost in a fatal passion for scribbling; such is the history of a voluminous author whose genius was such that he could write a folio much easier than a page; and "seldom dined" that he might quote "squadrons of authorities*."

GENIUS AND ERUDITION, THE VICTIMS OF IMMODERATE VANITY.

The name of Toland is more familiar than his character, yet his literary portrait has great singularity; he must be classed among the "Authors by Profession," an honour secured by near fifty publications; and we shall discover that he aimed to combine with the literary character, one peculiarly his own. With higher talents and more learning than have been conceded to him, there ran in his mind an original vein of thinking. Yet his whole life exhibits in how small a degree great intellectual powers, when scattered through all the forms which Vanity suggests, will contribute to an author's social comforts, or raise him in public esteem. Toland was fruitful in his productions, and still more in his projects; yet it is mortifying to estimate the result of all the intense activity of the life of an author of genius, which terminates in being placed among these Calamities.

Toland's birth was probably illegitimate; a circumstance which influenced the formation of his character. Baptised in ridicule, he had nearly fallen a victim to Mr. Shandy's system of Christian names, for he bore the strange ones of *Janus Junius*, which, when the school-roll was called over every morning, afforded perpetual merriment, till the Master blessed him with plain *John*, which the boy adopted, and lived in quiet. I must say something on the names themselves, perhaps as ridiculous! May they not have influenced the

* The very expression Prynne himself uses, see p. 668 of the Histriomastix; where having gone through "three squadrons," he commences a fresh chapter thus: "The fourth squadron of authorities is the venerable troope of 70 several renowned ancient fathers;" and he throws in more than he promised, all which are quoted volume and page, as so many "play-confounding arguments." He has, perhaps, quoted from three to four hundred authors on a single point.

character of Toland, since they certainly describe it? He had all the shiftings of the double-faced *Janus*, and the revolutionary politics of the ancient *Junius*. His godfathers sent him into the world in cruel mockery, thus to remind their Irish boy of the fortunes that await the desperately bold: nor did Toland forget the strong-marked designations; for to his most objectionable work, the Latin tract entitled *Pantheisticon*, descriptive of what some have considered as an atheistical society, he subscribes these appropriate names, which at the time were imagined to be fictitious.

Toland ran away from school and popery. When in after-life he was reproached with native obscurity, he ostentatiously produced a testimonial of his birth and family, hatched up at a convent of Irish Franciscans in Germany, where the good Fathers subscribed, with their ink tinged with their rhenish, to his most ancient descent, referring to the Irish history! which they considered as a parish register, fit for the suspected son of an Irish Priest!

Toland, from early life, was therefore dependent on patrons; but illegitimate birth creates strong and determined characters, and Toland had all the force and the originality of self-independence. He was a seed thrown by chance, to grow of itself wherever it falls.

This child of fortune studied at four Universities; at Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Leyden; from the latter he passed to Oxford, and, in the Bodleian Library, collected the materials for his after-studies.

He loved study, and even at a later period declares, that "no employment or condition of life shall make me disrelish the lasting entertainment of books." In his "Description of Epsom," he observes that the taste for retirement, reading, and contemplation, promotes the true relish for select company, and says,

"Thus I remove at pleasure, as I grow weary of the country or the town, as I avoid a crowd or seek company.—Here then let me have *books and bread* enough without dependence; a bottle of hermitage and a plate of olives for a select friend; with an early rose to present a young lady as an emblem of discretion no less than of beauty."

At Oxford appeared that predilection for paradoxes and over-curious speculations, which formed afterwards the marking feature of his literary character. He has been unjustly contemned as a sciolist; he was the correspondent of Leibnitz, Le Clerc, and Bayle, and was a learned author when scarcely a man. He first published a Dissertation on the strange tragical death of Regulus, and proved it a Roman legend. A greater paradox might have been his projected speculation on Job, to demonstrate that only the dialogue was genuine; the rest being the work of some idle Rabbin, who had invented a monstrous story to account for the extraordinary afflictions of that model of a divine mind. Speculations of so much learning and ingenuity are uncommon in a young man; but Toland was so unfortunate as to value his own merits, before those who did not care to hear of them.

Hardy vanity was to recompense him, perhaps he thought, for that want of fortune and connections, which raised duller spirits above him. Vain, loquacious, inconsiderate, and daring, he assumed the dictatorship of a coffee-house, and obtained easy conquests, which he mistook for glorious ones, over the graver fellows, who had for many a year awfully petrified their own colleges. He gave more violent offence by his new opinions on religion. An anonymous person addressed two letters to this new Heresiarch, solemn and monitory*. Toland's answer is as honourable as that of his monitor's. This passage is forcibly conceived:

"To what purpose should I study here or elsewhere, were I an *atheist* or *deist*, for one of the two you take me to be? What a condition to mention virtue, if I believed there was no God, or one so impotent that could not, or so malicious that would not, reveal himself! Nay, though I granted a Deity, yet, if nothing of me subsisted after death, what laws could bind, what incentives could move me to common honesty? Annihilation would be a sanctuary for all my sins, and put an end to my crimes with myself. Believe me I am not so indifferent to the evils of the present life, but, without the expectation of a better, I should soon suspend the mechanism of my body, and resolve into inconscious atoms."

This early moment of his life proved to be its crisis, and the first step he took decided his after-progress. His first great work of "Christianity not Mysterious," produced immense consequences. Toland persevered in denying that it was designed as any attack on Christianity, but only on those subtractions, additions, and other alterations, which have corrupted that pure institution. The work, at least, like its title, is "Mysterious †."

* These letters will interest every religious person; they may be found in Toland's posthumous works, vol. ii. p. 295.

† Toland pretends to prove that "there is nothing in the Christian Religion, not only which is contrary to reason, but even which is above it."—He made use of some arguments (says Le Clerc) that were drawn from Locke's Treatise on Human Understanding. I have seen in MS. a finished treatise by Locke, on Religion, addressed to Lady Shaftesbury; Locke gives it as a translation from the French. I regret my account is so imperfect; but the possessor may, perhaps, be induced to give it to the public. The French philosophers have drawn their

Toland passed over to Ireland, but his book having got there before him, the author beheld himself anathematised; the pulpits thundered, and it was dangerous to be seen conversing with him. A jury who confessed they could not comprehend a page of his book, condemned it to be burned. Toland now felt a tenderness for his person; and the humane Molyneux, the friend of Locke, while he censures the imprudent vanity of our author, gladly witnessed the flight of "the poor gentleman." But South, indignant at our English moderation in his own controversy with Sherlock on some doctrinal points of the Trinity, congratulates the Archbishop of Dublin on the Irish persecution; and equally witty and intolerant, he writes on Toland, "Your Parliament presently sent him packing, and, without the help of a *fagot*, soon made the kingdom *too hot* for him."

Toland was accused of an intention to found a sect, as South calls them, of "Mahometan-Christians." Many were stigmatised as *Tolandists*; but the disciples of a man who never procured for their prophet a bit of dinner or a new wig, for he was frequently wanting both, were not to be feared as enthusiasts. The persecution from the church only rankled in the breast of Toland, and excited unextinguishable revenge.

He now breathed awhile from the bonfire of theology; and our *Janus* turned his political face. He edited Milton's voluminous politics, and Harrington's fantastical Oceana, and, as his "Christianity not Mysterious" had stamped his religion with something worse than heresy, so in politics he was branded as a Commonwealth's-man. Toland had evidently strong nerves; for him, opposition produced controversy, which he loved, and controversy produced books, by which he lived.

But let it not be imagined that Toland affected to be considered as no Christian, or avowed himself as a republican. "Civil and religious toleration" (he says) "have been the two main objects of all my writings." He declares himself to be only a primitive Christian, and a pure whig. But an author must not be permitted to understand himself so much more clearly than he has enabled his readers to do. His mysterious conduct may be detected in his want of moral integrity.

He had the art of explaining away his own words, as in his first controversy about the word *mystery* in religion, and he exults in his artifice; for, in a letter, where he is soliciting the minister for employment, he says:—"The church is much exasperated against me; yet as that is the heaviest article, so it is undoubtedly the easiest conquered, and I know *the infallible method of doing it.*" And, in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, he promises to *reform his religion to that prelate's liking!* He took the sacrament as an opening for the negotiation.

What can be more explicit than his recantation at the close of his *Vindicius Liberius*? After telling us that he had withdrawn from sale, after the second edition, his "'Christianity not Mysterious,' when I perceived what real or pretended offence it had given," he concludes thus:—"Being now arrived to years that will not wholly excuse inconsiderateness in resolving, or precipitance in acting, I firmly hope that my *persuasion* and *practice* will show me *to be a true Christian*; that my due *conformity* to the *public worship* may prove me to be *a good Churchman*; and that my untainted loyalty to King William will argue me to be a stanch Commonwealth's-man. That I shall continue all my life a friend to religion, an enemy to superstition, a supporter of good kings, and a deposer of tyrants."

Observe, this *Vindicius Liberius* was published on his return from one of his political tours in Germany. His views were then of a very different nature from those of controversial divinity; but it was absolutely necessary to allay the storm the church had raised against him. We begin now to understand a little better the character of Toland These literary adventurers, with heroic pretensions, can practise the meanest artifices, and shrink themselves into nothing to creep out of a hole. How does this recantation agree with the "Nazarenus," and the other theological works which Toland was publishing all his life? Posterity only can judge of men's characters; it takes in at a glance the whole of a life; but contemporaries only view a part, often apparently unconnected and at variance, when in fact it is neither. This recantation is full of the spirit of *Janus Junius* Toland.

But we are concerned chiefly with Toland's literary character. He was so confirmed an author, that he never published one book without promising another. He refers to others in MS.; and some of his most curious works are posthumous. He was a great artificer of title-pages, covering them with a promising luxuriance; and in this way recommended his works to the booksellers. He had an odd taste for running inscriptions of whimsical crabbed terms; the gold-dust of erudition to gild over a title; such as "Tetradymus, Hodegus, Clidopharus;" "Adeisidaemon, or the Unsuperstitious." He pretends these affected titles indicated their several subjects; but the genius of Toland could descend to literary quackery.

first waters from English authors; and Toland, Tindale, and Woolston, with Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and Locke, were among their earliest acquisitions.

He had the art of propagating books; his small life of Milton produced several; besides the complacency he felt in extracting long passages from Milton against the bishops. In this life, his attack on the authenticity of the *Eikon Basilike* of Charles I. branched into another on suppositious writings; and this included the spurious gospels. Association of ideas is a nursing mother to the fertility of authorship. The spurious gospels opened a fresh theological campaign, and produced his "Amyntor." There was no end in provoking an author, who, in writing the life of a poet, could contrive to put the authenticity of the Testament to the proof.

Amid his philosophical labours, his *vanity* induced him to seize on all temporary topics to which his facility and ingenuity gave currency. The choice of his subjects forms an amusing catalogue; for he had "Remarks" and "Projects" as fast as events were passing. He wrote on "The Art of Governing by Parties," on "Anglia Libera," "Reasons for Naturalising the Jews," on "The Art of Canvassing at Elections," "On raising a National Bank without Capital," "The State Anatomy," "Dunkirk or Dover," &c. &c. These, and many like these, set off with catching titles, proved to the author that a man of genius may be capable of writing on all topics at all times, and make the country his debtor without benefiting his own creditors*.

There was a moment in Toland's life, when he felt, or thought he felt, fortune in his grasp. He was then floating on the ideal waves of the South-sea bubble. The poor author, elated with a notion that he was rich enough to print at his own cost, dispersed copies of his absurd "Pantheisticon." He describes a society of Pantheists, who worship the universe as God; a mystery much greater than those he attacked in Christianity. Their prayers are passages from Cicero and Seneca, and they chant long poems instead of psalms; so that in their zeal they endured a little tediousness. The next objectionable circumstance in this wild ebullition of philosophical wantonness is, the apparent burlesque of some liturgies; and a wag having inserted in some copies an impious prayer to Bacchus, Toland suffered for the folly of others as well as his own†. With the South-sea bubble, vanished Toland's desire of printing books at his own risk; and thus relieved the world from the weight of more *Pantheisticons!*

With all this bustle of authorship, amidst temporary publications which required such prompt ingenuity, and elaborate works which matured the fruits of early studies, Toland was still not a sedentary writer. I find that he often travelled on the continent; but how could a guinealess author so easily transport himself from Flanders to Germany, and appear at home in the courts of Berlin, Dresden, and Hanover? Perhaps we may discover a concealed feature in the character of our ambiguous philosopher.

In the only life we have of Toland, by Des Maiseaux, prefixed to his posthumous works, he tells us, that Toland was at the court of Berlin, but "an incident, *too ludicrous to be mentioned*, obliged him to leave that place sooner than he expected." Here is an incident in a narrative clearly marked out, but never to be supplied! Whatever this incident was, it had this important result, that it sent Toland away in haste; but *why* was he there? Our chronological biographer‡, "good easy man," suspects nothing more extraordinary when he tells us Toland was at Berlin or Hanover, than when he finds him at Epsom; imagines Toland only went to the electoral Princess Sophia, and the Queen of Prussia, who were "ladies of sublime genius," to entertain them by vexing some grave German divines, with philosophical conferences, and paradoxical conundrums; all the ravings of Toland's idleness§.

This secret history of Toland can only be picked out by fine threads. He professed to be a literary

* In examining the original papers of Toland, which are preserved, I found some of his agreements with booksellers. For his description of Epsom he was to receive only four guineas in case 1000 were sold. He received ten guineas for his pamphlet on Naturalising the Jews, and ten guineas more in case Bernard Lintott sold 2000. The words of this agreement run thus: "Whenever Mr. Toland calls for ten guineas, after the first of February next, I promise to pay them, if I *cannot show* that 200 of the copies remain unsold." What a sublime person is an author! What a misery is authorship! The great philosopher who creates systems that are to alter the face of his country, must stand at the counter to count out 200 unsold copies!

† Des Maiseaux frees Toland from this calumny, and hints at his own personal knowledge of the author—but he does not know what a foreign writer authenticates, that this blasphemous address to Bacchus is a parody of a prayer in the Roman ritual, wrote two centuries before by a very proper society of *Pantheists*, a club of drunkards!

‡ Warburton has well described Des Maiseaux: "All the Life-writers we have had are, indeed, strange insipid creatures. The verbose tasteless Frenchman seems to lay it down as a principle that every life must be a book, and what is worse, it proves a book without a life; for what do we know of Boileau after all his tedious stuff?"

§ One of these philosophical conferences has been preserved by Beausobre, who was indeed the party concerned. He inserted it in the "Bibliothèque Germanique," a curious literary journal, in 50 volumes, written by L'Enfant, Beausobre, and Formey. It is very copious, and very curious, and is preserved in the General Dictionary, art. Toland. The parties, after a warm contest, were very wisely interrupted by the Queen, when she discovered they had exhausted their learning, and were beginning to rail at each other.

character—he had opened a periodical "literary correspondence," as he terms it, with Prince Eugene; such as we have witnessed in our days by Grimm and La Harpe, addressed to some northern Princes. He was a favourite with the electoral Princess Sophia, and the Queen of Prussia, to whom he addressed his "Letters to Serena." Was he a political agent? Yet how was it that Toland was often driven home by distressed circumstances? He seems not to have been a practical politician, for he managed his own affairs very ill. Was the political intriguer rather a suspected, than a confidential servant of all his masters and mistresses? for it is evident no one cared for him! The absence of moral integrity was probably never disguised by the loquacious vanity of this literary adventurer.

In his posthumous works are several "Memorials" for the Earl of Oxford, which throw a new light over a union of political *Espionage* with the literary character, which finally concluded in producing that extraordinary one, which the political imagination of Toland created in all the obscurity and heat of his reveries.

In one of these "Memorials," forcibly written and full of curiosity, Toland remonstrates with the minister for his marked neglect of him; opens the scheme of a political tour, where, like *Guthrie*, he would be content with his *quarterage*. He defines his character: for the independent Whig affects to spurn at the office, though he might not shrink at the duties of a spy.

"Whether such a person, sir, who is *neither minister nor spy*, and as a *lover of learning will be welcome everywhere*, may not prove of extraordinary use to my Lord Treasurer, as well as to his predecessor *Burleigh*, who employed such, I leave his lordship and you to consider."

Still *this character*, whatever title may designate it, is inferior in dignity and importance to that which Toland afterwards projected, and which portrays him where his life-writer has not given a touch from his brush; it is a political curiosity.

"I laid an honester scheme of serving my country, your lordship, and myself: for, seeing it was neither convenient for you, nor a thing at all desired by me, that *I should appear in any public post*, I sincerely proposed, as occasions should offer, to communicate to your lordship my observations on *the temper of the ministry, the dispositions of the people, the condition of our enemies, or allies abroad*, and what I might think *most expedient in every conjuncture*; which advice you were to follow in whole, or in part, or not at all, as your own superior wisdom should direct. My general acquaintance, the several languages I speak, the experience I have acquired in foreign affairs, and being engaged in no interest at home, besides that of the public, should qualify me in some measure for this province. ALL WISE MINISTERS HAVE EVER HAD SUCH PRIVATE MONITORS. As much as I thought myself fit, or was thought so by others, for such general observations, so much have I ever abhorred, my lord, *those particular observers we call* SPIES; but I despise the calumny no less than I detest the thing.—Of such general observations, you should have perused a far greater number than I thought fit to present hitherto, had I discovered, by due effects, that they were acceptable from *me*; for they must unavoidably be received from *somebody*, unless a minister were omniscient—yet I soon had good reason to believe I was not designed for the man; whatever the original sin could be that made me incapable of such a trust, and which I now begin to suspect. Without direct answers to my proposals, how could I know whether I helped my friends elsewhere, or betrayed them contrary to my intentions! and accordingly I have for some time been very cautious and reserved. But if your lordship will enter into any measures with me, to procure *the good of my country*, I shall be more ready to *serve* your lordship in this, or in some becoming capacity, than any other minister. They who confided to my management affairs of a higher nature, have found me exact as well as secret. My impenetrable negotiation at Vienna (hid under the pretence of curiosity) was not only applauded by the prince that employed me, but also proportionably rewarded. And here, my lord, give me leave to say that I have found England miserably served abroad since this change; and our ministers at home are sometimes as great strangers to the genius as to the persons of those with whom they have to do.—At ——— you have placed the most unacceptable man in the world, one that lived in a scandalous misunderstanding with the minister of the States at another court, one that has been the laughing-stock of all courts, for his senseless haughtiness, and most ridiculous airs, and one that can never judge aright, unless by accident, in anything."

The discarded, or the suspected *private Monitor of the Minister*, warms into the tenderest language of political amour, and mourns their rupture but as the quarrels of lovers.

"I cannot, from all these considerations, but in the nature of a lover, complain of your present neglect, and be solicitous for your future care."—And again, "I have made use of the simile of a lover, and as such, indeed, I thought fit, once for all, to come to a thorough explanation, resolved, if my affection be not killed by your unkindness, to become indissolubly yours."

Such is the nice artifice which colours with a pretended love of his country, the sordidness of the

political intriguer, giving clean names to filthy things. But this view of the political face of our *Janus* is not complete till we discover the levity he could carry into politics when not disguised by more pompous pretensions. I shall give two extracts from letters composed in a different spirit.

"I am bound for Germany, though first for Flanders, and next for Holland. I believe I shall be pretty well accommodated for this voyage, which I expect will be very short. Lord! how near was *my old woman* being a queen! and your humble servant being *at his ease*."

His *old woman* was the electoral Princess Sophia; and *his ease* is what patriots distinguish as *the love of their country!* Again—

"The October Club, if rightly managed, will be rare stuff *to work the ends of any party*. I sent such an account of these wights to an *old gentlewoman* of my acquaintance, as in the midst of fears (the change of ministry) will make her laugh."

After all his voluminous literature, and his refined politics, Toland lived and died the life of an Author by Profession, in an obscure lodging at a country carpenter's, in great distress. He had still one patron left, who was himself poor, Lord Molesworth, who promised him, if he lived,

"Bare necessaries; these are but cold comfort to a man of your spirit and desert; but 'tis all I dare promise! 'Tis an ungrateful age, and we must bear with it the best we may till we can mend it."

And his lordship tells of his unsuccessful application to some Whig lord for Toland; and concludes,

"'Tis a sad monster of a man, and not worthy of further notice."

I have observed that Toland had strong nerves; he neither feared controversies, nor that which closes all. Having examined his manuscripts, I can sketch a minute picture of the last days of our "author by profession." At the carpenter's lodgings he drew up a list of all his books—they were piled on four chairs, to the amount of 155—most of them works which evince the most erudite studies; and as Toland's learning has been very lightly esteemed, it may be worth notice that some of his MSS. were transcribed in Greek*.

To this list he adds, "I need not recite those in the closet with the unbound books and pamphlets; nor my trunk, wherein are all my papers and MSS." I perceive he circulated his MSS. among his friends, for there is a list by him as he lent them, among which are ladies as well as gentlemen, *esprits forts!*

Never has author died more in character than Toland; he may be said to have died with a busy pen in his hand. Having suffered from an unskilful physician, he avenged himself in his own way; for there was found on his table an "Essay on Physic without Physicians." The dying patriot-trader was also writing a preface for a political pamphlet on *the danger of mercenary Parliaments*—and the philosopher was composing his own epitaph; one more proof of the ruling passion predominating in death; but why should a *Pantheist* be solicitous to perpetuate his genius and his fame! I shall transcribe a few lines; surely they are no evidence of Atheism!

"Omnium Literarum excultor,
ac linguarum plus decem sciens;
Veritatis propugnator,
Libertatis assertor;
nullus autem sectator aut cliens,
nec minis, nec malis est inflexus,
quin quam elegit, viam perageret;
utili honestum anteferens.
Spiritus cum æthereo patre,
à quo prodiit olim, conjungitur;
corpus item, Naturæ cedens,
in materno gremio reponitur.
Ipse vero æternum est resurrecturus,
at idem futurus TOLANDUS nunquam †."

* I subjoin, for the gratification of the curious, the titles of a few of these books. Spanhemii Opera; Clerici Pentateuchus; Constantini Lexicon Græco-Latinum; Fabricii Codex Apocryphus Vet. et Nov. Test.; Synesius de Regno; Historia imaginum cœlestium Gosselini, 16 volumes; Caryophili Dissertationes; Vonde Hardt Ephemerides Philologicæ; Trismegisti Opera; Recoldus, et alia Mahomedica; all the Works of Buxtorf; Salviani Opera; Reland de Relig. Mahomedica; Galli Opuscula Mythologica; Apollodori Bibliotheca; Palingenius; Apuleius; and every classical author of antiquity. As he was then employed in his curious history of the Druids, of which only a specimen is preserved, we may trace his researches in the following books: Luydii Archæologia Britannica; Old Irish Testament, &c.; Maccurtin's History of Ireland; O'Flaherty's Ogygia; Epistolarum Hibernicarum; Usher's Religion of the ancient Irish; Brand's Isles of Orkney and Zetland; Pezron's Antiquités des Celtes.

There are some singular papers among these fragments. One title of a work is "Priesthood without Priestcraft; or Superstition distinguished from Religion, Dominion from Order, and Bigotry from Reason, in the most principal Controversies about Church-government, which at present divide and deform Christianity." He has composed "A Psalm before Sermon in praise of Asinity." There are other singular titles and works in the mass of his papers.

† A lover of all literature,
and knowing more than ten languages;
a champion for truth,
an assertor of liberty,
but the follower or dependant of no man;
nor could menaces nor fortune bend him;

One would have imagined that the writer of his own panegyrical epitaph would have been careful to have transmitted to posterity a copy of his features; but I know of no portrait of Toland. His patrons seem never to have been generous, nor his disciples grateful; they mortified rather than indulged the egotism of his genius. There appeared, indeed, an elegy, shortly after the death of Toland, so ingeniously contrived, that it is not clear whether he is eulogised or ridiculed. Amid its solemnity these lines betray the sneer. "Has," exclaimed the eulogist of the ambiguous philosopher,

> "Each jarring element gone angry home?
> And *Master Toland* a *Non-ens* become?"

Locke, with all the prescient sagacity of that clear understanding which penetrated under the secret folds of the human heart, anticipated the life of Toland at its commencement. He admired the genius of the man; but, while he valued his parts and learning, he dreaded their result. In a letter I find these passages, which were then so prophetic, and are now so instructive:—

"If his exceeding great value of himself do not deprive the world of that usefulness that his parts, if rightly conducted, might be of, I shall be very glad.—The hopes young men give, of what use they will make of their parts, is, to me, the encouragement of being concerned for them; but, *if vanity increases with age, I always fear whither it will lead a man.*"

GENIUS, THE DUPE OF ITS PASSIONS.

Pope said that Steele, though he led a careless and vicious life, had nevertheless a love and reverence for virtue. The life of Steele was not that of a retired scholar; hence his moral character becomes more instructive. He was one of those whose hearts are the dupes of their imaginations, and who are hurried through life by the most despotic volition. He always preferred his caprices to his interests; or, according to his own notion, very ingenious, but not a little absurd, "he was always of the humour of preferring the state of his mind to that of his fortune." The result of this principle of moral conduct was, that a man of the most admirable abilities was perpetually acting like a fool, and, with a warm attachment to virtue, was the frailest of human beings.

> the way he had chosen he pursued,
> preferring honesty to his interest.
> His spirit is joined with its ethereal father
> from whom it originally proceeded;
> his body likewise, yielding to Nature,
> is again laid in the lap of its mother:
> but he is about to rise again in eternity,
> yet never to be the same Toland more.

In the first act of his life we find the seed that developed itself in the succeeding ones. His uncle could not endure a hero for his heir: but Steele had seen a marching regiment; a sufficient reason with him to enlist as a private in the horse-guards: cocking his hat, and putting on a broad-sword, jack-boots, and shoulder-belt, with the most generous feelings he forfeited a very good estate.—At length Ensign Steele's frank temper and wit conciliated esteem, and extorted admiration, and the ensign became a favourite leader in all the dissipations of the town. All these were the ebullitions of genius, which had not yet received a legitimate direction. Amid these orgies, however, it was often pensive, and forming itself; for it was in the height of these irregularities that Steele composed his "Christian Hero," a moral and religious treatise, which the contritions of every morning dictated, and to which the disorders of every evening added another penitential page. Perhaps the genius of Steele was never so ardent and so pure as at this period; and in his elegant letter to his commander, the celebrated Lord Cutts, he gives an interesting account of the origin of this production, which none but one deeply imbued with its feelings could have so forcibly described.

"*Tower Guard, March* 23, 1701.

"My Lord,

"The address of the following papers is so very much due to your lordship, that they are but a mere report of what has passed upon my guard to my commander; for they were writ upon duty, when the mind was perfectly disengaged, and at leisure, in the silent watch of the night, to run over the busy dream of the day; and the vigilance which obliges us to suppose an enemy always near us, has awakened a sense that there is a restless and subtle one which constantly attends our steps, and meditates our ruin*."

To this solemn and monitory work he prefixed his name, from this honourable motive, that it might serve as "a standing testimony against himself, and make him ashamed of understanding, and seeming to feel what was virtuous, and living so quite contrary a life." Do we not think that no one less than a saint is speaking to us? And yet he is still nothing more than Ensign Steele! He tells us that this grave work made him considered, who had been no undelightful companion, as a disagreeable fellow—and "The Christian Hero," by his own words, appears to have fought off several fool-hardy geniuses who were for "trying their valour on him," supposing a saint was necessarily a poltroon. Thus "The Christian Hero,"

* Mr. Nichols's "Epistolary Correspondence of Sir Richard Steele," vol. i. p. 77.

finding himself slighted by his loose companions, sat down and composed a most laughable comedy, "The Funeral;" and with all the frankness of a man who cares not to hide his motives, he tells us, that after his religious work he wrote the comedy because "nothing can make the town so fond of a man as a successful play*." The historian who had to record such strange events, following close on each other, as an author publishing a book of piety, and then a farce, could never have discovered the secret motive of the versatile writer, had not that writer possessed the most honest frankness.

Steele was now at once a man of the town and its censor, and wrote lively essays on the follies of the day in an enormous black peruke which cost him fifty guineas! He built an elegant villa, but, as he was always inculcating economy, he dates from "The Hovel." He detected the fallacy of the South-sea scheme, while he himself invented projects, neither inferior in magnificence nor in misery. He even turned alchemist, and wanted to coin gold, merely to distribute it. The most striking incident in the life of this man of volition, was his sudden marriage with a young lady who attended his first wife's funeral—struck by her angelical beauty, if we trust to his raptures. Yet this sage, who would have written so well on the choice of a wife, united himself to a character the most uncongenial to his own; cold, reserved, and most anxiously prudent in her attention to money, she was of a temper which every day grew worse by the perpetual imprudence and thoughtlessness of his own. He calls her "Prue" in fondness and reproach; she was Prudery itself! His adoration was permanent, and so were his complaints; and they never parted but with bickerings—yet he could not suffer her absence, for he was writing to her three or four passionate notes in a day, which are dated from his office, or his bookseller's, or from some friend's house—he has risen in the midst of dinner to despatch a line to "Prue," to assure her of his affection since noon†.—Her presence or her absence was equally painful to him.

Yet Steele, gifted at all times with the susceptibility of genius, was exercising the finest feelings of the heart; the same generosity of temper which deluded his judgment, and invigorated his passions, rendered him a tender and pathetic dramatist; a most fertile essayist; a patriot without private views; an enemy whose resentment died away in raillery; and a friend, who could warmly press the hand that chastised him. Whether in administration, or expelled the House; whether affluent, or flying from his creditors; in the fulness of his heart he, perhaps, secured his own happiness, and lived on, like some wits, extempore. But such men, with all their virtues and all their genius, live only for themselves.

Steele, in the waste of his splendid talents, had raised sudden enmities and transient friendships. The world uses such men as Eastern travellers do fountains; they drink their waters, and when their thirst is appeased, turn their backs on them. Steele lived to be forgotten. He opened his

* Steele has given a delightful piece of self-biography, towards the end of his "Apology for himself and his writings," p. 80, 4to.

† In the "Epistolary Correspondence of Sir Richard Steele," edition of 1809, are preserved these extraordinary love-despatches; "Prue" used poor Steele at times very ill; indeed Steele seems to have conceived that his warm affections were all she required, for Lady Steele was usually left whole days in solitude, and frequently in want of a guinea, when Steele could not raise one. He, however, sometimes remonstrates with her very feelingly. The following note is an instance:—

"Dear Wife,

"I have been in great pain of body and mind since I came out. You are extremely cruel to a generous nature, which has a tenderness for you that renders your least *dishumour* insupportably afflicting. After short starts of passion, not to be inclined to reconciliation, is what is against all rules of Christianity and justice. When I come home, I beg to be kindly received; or this will have as ill an effect upon my fortune, as on my mind and body."

In a postscript to another billet, he thus "sneers at Lady Steele's excessive attention to money":—

"Your man Sam owes me threepence, which must be deducted in the account between you and me; therefore, pray take care to get it in, or stop it."

Such despatches as the following were sent off three or four times in a day:—

"I beg of you not to be impatient, though it be an hour before you see Your obliged husband,

"R. Steele."

"Dear Prue,

"Don't be displeased that I do not come home till eleven o'clock. Yours, ever."

"Dear Prue,

"Forgive me dining abroad, and let Will carry the papers to Buckley's. Your fond devoted R. S."

"Dear Prue,

"I am very sleepy and tired, but could not think of closing my eyes till I had told you I am, dearest creature, your most affectionate faithful husband, R. Steele.

"From the Press, One in the morning."

It would seem by the following note, that this hourly account of himself was in consequence of the connubial mandate of his fair despot:—

"Dear Prue,

"It is a strange thing, because you are handsome, that you will not behave yourself with the obedience that people of worse features do—but that I must be always giving you an account of every trifle and minute of my time. I send this to tell you I am waiting to be sent for again when my Lord Wharton is stirring."

career with folly; he hurried through it in a tumult of existence; and he closed it by an involuntary exile, amid the wrecks of his fortune and his mind.

Steele, in one of his numerous periodical works, the twelfth number of the Theatre, has drawn an exquisite contrast between himself and his friend Addison: it is a cabinet picture. Steele's careful pieces, when warm with his subject, had a higher spirit, a richer flavour, than the equable softness of Addison, who is only beautiful.

"There never was a more strict friendship than between these gentlemen; nor had they ever any difference but what proceeded from their different way of pursuing the same thing: the one, with patience, foresight, and temperate address, always waited and stemmed the torrent; while the other often plunged himself into it, and was as often taken out by the temper of him who stood weeping on the bank for his safety, whom he could not dissuade from leaping into it. Thus these two men lived for some years last past, shunning each other, but still preserving the most passionate concern for their mutual welfare. But when they met, they were as unreserved as boys; and talked of the greatest affairs, upon which they saw where they differed, without pressing (what they knew impossible) to convert each other."

If Steele had the honour of the invention of those periodical papers which first enlightened the national genius by their popular instruction, he is himself a remarkable example of the moral and the literary character perpetually contending in the man of volition.

LITERARY DISAPPOINTMENTS DISORDERING THE INTELLECT.

LELAND AND COLLINS.

This awful calamity may be traced in the fate of Leland and Collins: the one exhausted the finer faculties of his mind in the grandest views, and sunk under gigantic tasks; the other enthusiast sacrificed his reason and his happiness to his imagination.

Leland, the father of our antiquaries, was an accomplished scholar; and his ample mind had embraced the languages of antiquity, those of his own age, and the ancient ones of his own country: thus he held all human learning by its three vast chains. He travelled abroad; and he cultivated poetry with the ardour he could even feel for the acquisition of words. On his return home, among other royal favours, he was appointed by Henry VIII. the king's antiquary, a title honourably created for Leland; for with him it became extinct. By this office he was empowered to search after English antiquities; to review the libraries of all the religious institutions, and to bring the records of antiquity "out of deadly darkness into lively light." This extensive power fed a passion already formed by the study of our old rude historians; his elegant taste perceived that they wanted those graces which he could lend them.

Six years were occupied, by uninterrupted travel and study, to survey our national antiquities; to note down everything observable for the history of the country and the honour of the nation. What a magnificent view has he sketched of this learned journey! In search of knowledge, Leland wandered on the sea-coasts and in the midland; surveyed towns and cities, and rivers, castles, cathedrals, and monasteries; tumuli, coins, and inscriptions; collected authors; transcribed MSS. If antiquarianism pored, genius too meditated in this sublime industry.

Another six years were devoted to shape and to polish the immense collections he had amassed. All this untired labour and continued study were rewarded by Henry VIII. It is delightful, from its rarity, to record the gratitude of a patron: Henry was worthy of Leland; and the genius of the author was magnificent as that of the monarch who had created it.

Nor was the gratitude of Leland silent: he seems to have been in the habit of perpetuating his spontaneous emotions in elegant Latin verse. Our author has fancifully expressed his gratitude to the king:—

"Sooner," he says, "shall the seas float without their silent inhabitants; the thorny hedges cease to hide the birds; the oak to spread its boughs; and Flora to paint the meadows with flowers;

> "Quàm Rex dive, tuum labatur pectore nostro
> Nomen, quod studiis portus et aura meis."
>
> "Than thou, great King, my bosom cease to hail,
> Who o'er my studies breath'st a favouring gale."

Leland was, indeed, alive to the kindness of his royal patron; and among his numerous literary projects, was one of writing a history of all the palaces of Henry, in imitation of Procopius, who described those of the Emperor Justinian. He had already delighted the royal ear in a beautiful effusion of fancy and antiquarianism, in his *Cygnea Cantio*, the Song of the Swans. The swan of Leland, melodiously floating down the Thames, from Oxford to Greenwich, chants, as she passes along, the ancient names and honours of the towns, the castles, and the villages.

Leland presented his "Strena, or a New Year's Gift," to the King.—It consists of an account of his studies; and sketches, with a fervid and vast

imagination, his magnificent labour, which he had already inscribed with the title *De Antiquitate Britannica*, and which was to be divided into as many books as there were shires. All parts of this address of the King's Antiquary to the King, bear the stamp of his imagination and his taste. He opens his intention of improving, by the classical graces of composition, the rude labours of our ancestors; for,

"Except Truth be delicately clothed in purpure, her written verytees can scant find a reader."

Our old writers, he tells his sovereign, had, indeed,

"From time to time preserved the acts of your predecessors, and the fortunes of your realm, with great diligence, and no less faith; would to God with like eloquence!"

An exclamation of fine taste, when taste was yet a stranger in the country. And when he alludes to the knowledge of British affairs scattered among the Roman, as well as our own writers, his fervid fancy breaks forth with an image at once simple and sublime:

"I trust," says Leland, "so to open the window, that the light shall be seen so long, that is to say, by the space of a whole thousand years stopped up, and the old glory of your Britain to re-flourish through the world*."

And he pathetically concludes,

"Should I live to perform those things that are already begun, I trust that your realm shall so well be known, once painted with its native colours, that it shall give place to the glory of no other region."

The grandeur of this design was a constituent part of the genius of Leland, but not less, too, was that presaging melancholy which even here betrays itself, and even more frequently in his verses. Everything about Leland was marked by his own greatness; his country and his countrymen were ever present; and, by the excitement of his feelings, even his humbler pursuits were elevated into patriotism. Henry died the year after he received "The New Year's Gift." From that moment, in losing the greatest patron for the greatest work, Leland appears to have felt the staff which he had used to turn at pleasure for his stay, break in his hands.

He had new patrons to court, while engaged in labours for which a single life had been too short.

* Leland, in his magnificent plan, included several curious departments. Jealous of the literary glory of the Italians, whom he compares to the Greeks for accounting all nations barbarous and unlettered, he had composed four books "De Viris Illustribus," on English Authors, to force them to acknowledge the illustrious genius, and the great men of Britain. Three books "De Nobilitate Britannica," were to be "as an ornament and a right comely garland."

The melancholy that cherishes genius may also destroy it. Leland, brooding over his voluminous labours, seemed to love and to dread them; sometimes to pursue them with rapture, and sometimes to shrink from them with despair. His generous temper had once shot forwards to posterity; but he now calms his struggling hopes and doubts, and confines his literary ambition to his own country and his own age.

"POSTERITATIS AMOR DUBIUS.

"Posteritatis amor mihi perblanditur, et ultro
Promittit libris secula multa meis.
At non tam facile est oculato imponere, nosco
Quàm non sim tali dignus honore frui.
Græcia magniloquos vates desiderat ipsa,
Roma suos etiam disperiise dolet.
Exemplis quum sim claris edoctus ab istis,
Qui sperem Musas vivere posse meas?
Certè mi sat erit præsenti scribere sæclo,
Auribus et patriæ complacuisse meæ."

IMITATED.

"Posterity, thy soothing love I feel,
That o'er my volumes many an age may steal:
But hard it is the well-clear'd eye to cheat
With honours undeserved, too fond deceit!
Greece, greatly eloquent, and full of fame,
Sighs for the want of many a perish'd name;
And Rome o'er her illustrious children mourns,
Their fame departing with their mouldering urns.
How can I hope, by such examples shown,
More than a transient day, a passing sun?
Enough for me to win the present age,
And please a brother with a brother's page."

By other verses, addressed to Cranmer, it would appear that Leland was experiencing anxieties to which he had not been accustomed,—and one may suspect, by the opening image of his "Supellex," that his pension was irregular, and that he began, as authors do in these hard cases, to value "the furniture" of his mind above that of his house.

"AD THOMAM CRANMERUM.

CANT. ARCHIEPISCOP.

"Est congesta mihi domi Supellex
Ingens, aurea, nobilis, venusta,
Quâ totus studeo Britanniarum
Vero reddere gloriam nitori.
Sed Fortuna meis noverca cœptis
Jam felicibus invidet maligna.
Quare, ne pereant brevi vel horâ
Multarum mihi noctium labores
Omnes, et patriæ simul decora
Ornamenta cadant," &c. &c.

IMITATED.

"The furnitures that fill my house,
The vast and beautiful disclose,
All noble, and the store is gold;
Our ancient glory here unroll'd.

But fortune checks my daring claim,
A step-mother severe to fame.
A smile malignantly she throws
Just at the story's prosperous close.
And thus must the unfinish'd tale,
And all my many vigils fail,
And must my country's honour fall;
In one brief hour must perish all?"

But, conscious of the greatness of his labours, he would obtain the favour of the Archbishop, by promising a share of his own fame—

"——— pretium sequetur amplum—
Sic nomen tibi litteræ elegantes
Rectè perpetuum dabunt, suoque
Partim vel titulos tibi receptos
Concedet memori Britannus ore:
Sic te posteritas amabit omnis,
Et famâ super æthera innotesces."

IMITATED.

"But take the ample glorious meed,
To letter'd elegance decreed,
When Britain's mindful voice shall bend,
And with her own thy honours blend,
As she from thy kind hands receives
Her titles drawn on Glory's leaves,
And back reflects them on thy name,
Till time shall love thy mounting fame."

Thus was Leland, like the melancholic, withdrawn entirely into the world of his own ideas; his imagination delighting in reveries, while his industry was exhausting itself in labour. His manners were not free from haughtiness,—his meagre and expressive physiognomy indicates the melancholy and the majesty of his mind, it was not old age, but the premature wrinkles of those nightly labours he has himself recorded. All these characteristics are so strongly marked in the bust of Leland, that Lavater had triumphed had he studied it*.

Labour had been long felt as voluptuousness by Leland; and this is among the Calamities of Literature, and it is so with all those studies which deeply busy the intellect and the fancy. There is a poignant delight in study, often subversive of human happiness. Men of genius, from their ideal state, drop into the cold formalities of society, to encounter its evils, its disappointments, its neglect, and perhaps its persecutions. When such minds discover the world will only become a friend on its own terms, then the cup of their wrath overflows; the learned grow morose, and the witty sarcastic; but more indelible emotions in a highly-excited imagination often produce those delusions, which Darwin calls hallucinations, and which sometimes terminate in mania. The haughtiness, the melancholy, and the aspiring genius of Leland, were tending to a disordered intellect. Incipient insanity is a mote floating in the understanding, escaping all observation, when the mind is capable of observing itself, but seems a constituent part of the mind itself when that is completely covered with its cloud.

Leland did not reach even the maturity of life, the period at which his stupendous works were to be executed. He was seized by frenzy. The causes of his insanity were never known. The Papists declared he went mad because he had embraced the new religion; his malicious rival Polydore Vergil, because he had promised what he could not perform; duller prosaists because his poetical turn had made him conceited. The grief and melancholy of a fine genius, and perhaps an irregular pension, his enemies have not noticed.

The ruins of Leland's mind were viewed in his library; volumes on volumes stupendously heaped together, and masses of notes scattered here and there; all the vestiges of his genius, and its distraction. His collections were seized on by honest and dishonest hands; many were treasured, but some were stolen. Hearne zealously arranged a series of volumes from the fragments; but the Britannia of Camden, the London of Stowe, and the Chronicles of Holinshed, are only a few of those public works whose waters silently welled from the spring of Leland's genius; and that nothing might be wanting to preserve some relic of that fine imagination which was always working in his poetic soul, his own description of his learned journey over the kingdom was a spark, which, falling into the inflammable mind of a poet, produced the singular and patriotic poem of the Polyolbion of Drayton. Thus the genius of Leland has come to us diffused through a variety of other men's; and what he intended to produce it has required many to perform.

A singular inscription, in which Leland speaks of himself, in the style he was accustomed to use, and which Weever tells us was affixed to his monument, as he had heard by tradition, was probably a relic snatched from his general wreck—for it could not with propriety have been composed after his death†.

"Quantùm Rhenano debet Germania docto
Tantùm debebit terra Britanna mihi.
Ille suæ gentis ritus et nomina prisca
Æstivo fecit lucidiora die.
Ipse antiquarum rerum quoque magnus amator
Ornabo patriæ lumina clara meæ.
Quæ cum prodierint niveis inscripta tabellis,
Tum testes nostræ sedulitatis erunt."

* What reason is there to suppose with Granger that his bust, so admirably engraven by Grignion, is supposititious? Probably struck by the premature old age of a man who died in his fortieth year, he condemned it by its appearance; but not with the eye of the physiognomist.

† Ancient Funerall Monuments, p. 692.

IMITATED.

"What Germany to learn'd Rhenanus owes,
That for my Britain shall my toil unclose;
His volumes mark their customs, names, and climes,
And brighten, with a summer's light, old times.
I also, touch'd by the same love, will write,
To ornament my country's splendid light,
Which shall, inscribed on snowy tablets, be
Full many a witness of my industry."

Another example of literary disappointment disordering the intellect, may be contemplated in the fate of the poet COLLINS.

Several interesting incidents may be supplied to Johnson's narrative of the short and obscure life of this poet, who, more than any other of our martyrs to the lyre, has thrown over all his images and his thoughts a tenderness of mind, and breathed a freshness over the pictures of poetry, which the mighty Milton has not exceeded, and the laborious Gray has not attained. But he immolated happiness, and at length reason, to his imagination! The incidents most interesting in the life of Collins would be those events which elude the ordinary biographer; that invisible train of emotions which were gradually passing in his mind; those passions which first moulded his genius, and which afterwards broke it! But who could record the vacillations of a poetic temper; its early hope, and its late despair; its wild gaiety, and its settled frenzy; but the poet himself? Yet Collins has left behind no memorial of the wanderings of his alienated mind, but the errors of his life!

At college he published his "Persian Eclogues," as they were first called, to which, when he thought they were not distinctly Persian, he gave the more general title of "Oriental." The publication was attended with no success; but the first misfortune a poet meets will rarely deter him from incurring more. He suddenly quitted the university, and has been censured for not having consulted his friends when he rashly resolved to live by the pen. But he had no friends! His father had died in embarrassed circumstances; and Collins was residing at the university on the stipend allowed him by his uncle, Colonel Martin, who was abroad. He was indignant at a repulse he met with at college; and alive to the name of author and poet, the ardent and simple youth imagined that a nobler field of action opened on him in the metropolis than was presented by the flat uniformity of a collegiate life. To whatever spot the youthful poet flies, that spot seems Parnassus, as applause seems patronage. He hurried to town, and presented himself before the cousin, who paid his small allowance from his uncle, in a fashionable dress, with a feather in his hat. The graver gentleman did not succeed in his attempt at sending him back, with all the terror of his information, that Collins had not a single guinea of his own, and was dressed in a coat he could never pay for. The young bard turned from his obdurate cousin as "a dull fellow;" a usual phrase with him to describe those who did not think as he would have them.

That moment was now come, so much desired, and scarcely yet dreaded, which was to produce those effusions of fancy and learning, for which Collins had prepared himself by previous studies. About this time Johnson* has given a finer picture of the intellectual powers and the literary attainments of Collins, than in the life he afterwards composed. Collins was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages; "full of hopes and full of projects, versed in many languages, high in fancy, and strong in retention." Such was the language of Johnson, when, warmed by his own imagination, he could write like Longinus; at that after-period, when assuming the austerity of critical discussion for the lives of poets, even in the coldness of his recollections, he describes Collins as "a man of extensive literature, and of vigorous faculties."

A chasm of several years remains to be filled. He was projecting works of labour, and creating productions of taste; and he has been reproached for irresolution, and even for indolence. Let us catch his feelings from the facts as they rise together, and learn whether Collins must endure censure or excite sympathy.

When he was living loosely about town, he occasionally wrote many short poems in the house of a friend, who witnesses that he burned as rapidly as he composed. His odes were purchased by Millar, yet though but a slight pamphlet, all the interest of that great bookseller could never introduce them into notice. Not an idle compliment is recorded to have been sent to the poet. When we now consider that among these odes was one the most popular in the language, with some of the most exquisitely poetical, it reminds us of the difficulty a young writer without connexions experiences in obtaining the public ear; and of the languor of poetical connoisseurs who sometimes suffer poems, that have not yet grown up to authority, to be buried on the shelf. What the outraged feelings of the poet were, appeared when some time afterwards he became rich enough to express them. Having obtained some fortune by the death of his uncle, he made good to the publisher the deficiency of the unsold odes, and, in his haughty resentment at the public taste, consigned the impression to the flames!

Who shall now paint the feverish and delicate feelings of a young poet such as Collins, who had

* In a letter to Joseph Warton.

twice addressed the public, and twice had been repulsed? He whose poetic temper Johnson has finely painted, at the happy moment when he felt its influence, as "delighting to rove through the meadows of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, and repose by the waterfalls of Elysian gardens!"

It cannot be doubted, and the recorded facts will demonstrate it, that the poetical disappointments of Collins were secretly preying on his spirit, and repressing his firmest exertions. With a mind richly stored with literature, and a soul alive to the impulses of nature and study, he projected a "History of the Revival of Learning," and a translation of "Aristotle's Poetics," to be illustrated by a large commentary.

But "his great fault," says Johnson, "was his *irresolution*; or the frequent calls of *immediate necessity* broke his schemes, and suffered him to pursue no settled purpose." Collins was, however, not idle, though without application; for, when reproached with idleness by a friend, he showed instantly several sheets of his version of Aristotle, and many embryos of some lives he had engaged to compose for the Biographia Britannica; he never brought either to perfection! What then was this *irresolution* but the vacillations of a mind broken and confounded? He had exercised too constantly the highest faculties of fiction, and he had precipitated himself into the dreariness of real life. None but a poet can conceive, for none but a poet can experience, the secret wounds inflicted on a mind of romantic fancy and tenderness of emotion, which has staked its happiness on its imagination; for such neglect is felt as ordinary men would feel the sensation of being let down into a sepulchre, and buried alive. The mind of Tasso, a brother in fancy to Collins, became disordered by the opposition of the critics, but perpetual neglect injures it not less. The HOPE of the ancients was represented holding some flowers, the promise of the spring, or some spikes of corn, indicative of approaching harvest —but the HOPE of Collins had scattered its seed, and they remained buried in the earth.

The oblivion which covered our poet's works appeared to him eternal, as those works now seem to us immortal. He had created HOPE with deep and enthusiastic feeling!—

> "With eyes so fair—
> Whispering promised pleasure,
> And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail;
> And Hope, enchanted, smiled, and waved her golden hair!"

The few years Collins passed in the metropolis he was subsisting with or upon his friends; and, being a pleasing companion, he obtained many literary acquaintances. It was at this period that Johnson knew him, and thus describes him:—"His appearance was decent, and his knowledge considerable; his views extensive, and his conversation elegant." He was a constant frequenter at the literary resorts of the Bedford and Slaughter's; and Armstrong, Hill, Garrick, and Foote, frequently consulted him on their pieces before they appeared in public. From his intimacy with Garrick he obtained a free admission into the green-room; and probably it was at this period, among his other projects, that he planned several tragedies, which, however, as Johnson observes, "he only planned." There is a feature in Collins's character which requires attention. He is represented as a man of cheerful dispositions; and it has been my study to detect only a melancholy, which was preying on the very source of life itself. Collins was, indeed, born to charm his friends; for fancy and elegance were never absent from his susceptible mind, rich in its stores, and versatile in its emotions. He himself indicates his own character, in his address to "Home:"—

> "Go! nor, regardless while these numbers boast
> My short-lived bliss, forget my social name."

Johnson has told us of his cheerful dispositions; and one who knew him well observes, that "in the green-room he made diverting observations on the vanity and false consequence of that class of people, and his manner of relating them to his particular friends was extremely entertaining;" but the same friend acknowledges that "some letters which he received from Collins, though chiefly on business, have in them some flights which strongly mark his character, and for which reason I have preserved them." We cannot decide of the temper of a man viewed only in a circle of friends, who listen to the ebullitions of wit or fancy; the social warmth for a moment throws into forgetfulness his secret sorrow. The most melancholy man is frequently the most delightful companion, and peculiarly endowed with the talent of satirical playfulness and vivacity of humour*. But what was the true

* Burton, the author of "The Anatomy of Melancholy," offers a striking instance. Bishop Kennett, in his curious "Register and Chronicle," has preserved the following particulars of this author. "In an interval of vapours *he would be extremely pleasant, and raise laughter in any company.* Yet I have heard, that nothing at last could make him laugh, but, going down to the Bridge-foot at Oxford, and hearing the bargemen scold and storm and swear at one another; at which he would set his hands to his sides, and laugh most profusely; yet in his chamber so mute and mopish, that he was suspected to be *felo de se.*" With what a fine strain of poetic feeling has a modern bard touched this subject!—

life of Collins, separated from its adventitious circumstances? It was a life of want, never chequered by hope, that was striving to elude its own observation by hurrying into some temporary dissipation. But the hours of melancholy and solitude were sure to return; these were marked on the dial of his life, and, when they struck, the gay and lively Collins, like one of his own enchanted beings, as surely relapsed into his natural shape. To the perpetual recollection of his poetical disappointments, are we to attribute this unsettled state of his mind, and the perplexity of his studies. To these he was perpetually reverting, which he showed when after a lapse of several years, he could not rest till he had burned his ill-fated odes. And what was the result of his literary life? He returned to his native city of Chichester in a state almost of nakedness, destitute, diseased, and wild in despair, to hide himself in the arms of a sister.

The cloud had long been gathering over his convulsed intellect; and the fortune he acquired on the death of his uncle served only for personal indulgences, which rather accelerated his disorder. There were, at times, some awful pauses in the alienation of his mind—but he had withdrawn it from study. It was in one of these intervals that Thomas Warton told Johnson that when he met Collins travelling, he took up a book the poet carried with him, from curiosity, to see what companion a man of letters had chosen—it was an English Testament. "I have but one book," said Collins, "but that is the best." This circumstance is recorded on his tomb.

> "He join'd pure faith to strong poetic powers,
> And in reviving reason's lucid hours,
> Sought on one book his troubled mind to rest,
> And rightly deem'd the book of God the best."

At Chichester, tradition has preserved some striking and affecting occurrences of his last days; he would haunt the aisles and cloisters of the cathedral, roving days and nights together, loving their

> "Dim religious light."

And, when the choristers chanted their anthem, the listening and bewildered poet, carried out of himself by the solemn strains, and his own too susceptible imagination, moaned and shrieked, and awoke a sadness and a terror most affecting amid religious emotions; their friend, their kinsman, and their poet, was before them, an awful image of human misery and ruined genius!

> "As a beam o'er the face of the waters may glow,
> While the tide runs in darkness and coldness below,
> So the cheek may be tinged with a warm sunny smile,
> Though the cold heart to ruin runs darkly the while."
>
> MOORE'S Irish Melodies.

This interesting circumstance is thus alluded to on his monument:—

> "Ye walls that echoed to his frantic moan,
> Guard the due record of this grateful stone:
> Strangers to him, enamour'd of his lays,
> This fond memorial of his talents raise."

A voluntary subscription raised the monument to Collins. The genius of Flaxman has thrown out on the eloquent marble all that fancy would consecrate; the tomb is itself a poem.

There Collins is represented as sitting in a reclining posture, during a lucid interval of his afflicting malady, with a calm and benign aspect, as if seeking refuge from his misfortunes in the consolations of the Gospel, which lie open before him, whilst his lyre, and "the Ode on the Passions," as a scroll, are thrown together neglected on the ground. Upon the pediment on the tablet are placed in relief two female figures of LOVE and PITY, entwined each in the arms of the other; the proper emblems of the genius of his poetry.

Langhorne, who gave an edition of Collins's poems with all the fervour of a votary, made an observation not perfectly correct:—"It is observable," he says, "that none of his poems bear the marks of an amorous disposition; and that he is one of those few poets who have sailed to Delphi, without touching at Cythera. In the 'Ode to the Passions,' *Love* has been omitted." There, indeed, Love does not form an important personage; yet, at the close, *Love* makes his transient appearance with *Joy* and *Mirth*—"a gay fantastic rond."

> "And, amidst his frolic play,
> As if he would the charming air repay,
> Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings."

It is certain, however, that Collins considered the amatory passion as unfriendly to poetic originality; for he alludes to the whole race of the Provençal poets, by accusing them of only employing

> "Love, only love, her forceless numbers mean."

Collins affected to slight the urchin; for he himself had been once in love, and his wit has preserved the history of his passion; he was attached to a young lady who was born the day before him, and who seems not to have been very poetically tempered, for she did not return his ardour. On that occasion, he said "that he came into the world *a day after the fair*."

Langhorne composed two sonnets, which seem only preserved in the Monthly Review, in which he was a writer, and where he probably inserted them; they bear a particular reference to the

misfortunes of our poet. In one he represents Wisdom, in the form of Addison, reclining in "the old and honoured shade of Magdalen," and thus addressing

"The poor shade of Collins, wandering by;
The tear stood trembling in his gentle eye,
With modest grief reluctant, while he said—
'Sweet bard, belov'd by every muse in vain!
With pow'rs, whose fineness wrought their own decay;
Ah! wherefore, thoughtless, didst thou yield the rein
To fancy's will, and chase the meteor ray?
Ah! why forget thy own Hyblæan strain,
Peace rules the breast, where Reason rules the day.'"

The last line is most happily applied; it is a verse by the unfortunate bard himself; which heightens the contrast with his forlorn state! Langhorne has feelingly painted the fatal indulgences of such a character as Collins.

"Of fancy's too prevailing power beware!
Oft has she bright on life's fair morning shone;
Oft seated Hope on Reason's sovereign throne,
Then closed the scene, in darkness and despair.
Of all her gifts, of all her powers possest,
Let not her flattery win thy youthful ear,
Nor vow long faith to such a various guest,
False at the last, tho' now perchance full dear;
The casual lover with her charms is blest,
But woe to them her magic bands that wear!"

The criticism of Johnson on the poetry of Collins, that "as men are often esteemed who cannot be loved, so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure," might almost have been furnished by the lumbering pen of old Dennis. But Collins from the poetical never *extorts* praise, for it is given *spontaneously*; he is much *more loved* than *esteemed*, for he does not give *little pleasure*. Johnson, too, describes "his lines as of slow motion, clogged and impeded with clusters of consonants." Even this verbal criticism, though it appeals to the eye, and not to the ear, is false criticism; since Collins is certainly the most musical of poets. How could that Lyrist be harsh in his diction, who almost draws tears from our eyes, while his melodious lines and picturing epithets are remembered by his readers? He is devoured with as much enthusiasm by one party as he is imperfectly relished by the other.

Johnson has given two characters of this poet; the one composed at a period when that great critic was still susceptible of the seduction of the imagination; but even in this portrait, though some features of the poet are impressively drawn, the likeness is incomplete, for there is not even a slight indication of the chief feature in Collins's genius, his tenderness and delicacy of emotion, and his fresh and picturesque creative strokes. Nature had denied to Johnson's robust intellect the perception of these poetic qualities. He was but a stately ox in the fields of Parnassus, not the animal of nature. Many years afterwards, during his poetical biography, that long Lent of criticism, in which he mortified our poetical feelings by accommodating his to the populace of critics,—so faint were former recollections, and so imperfect were even those feelings which once he seemed to have possessed,—that he could then do nothing but write on Collins with much less warmth than he has written on Blackmore. Johnson is, indeed, the first of critics, when his powerful logic investigates objects submitted to reason; but great sense is not always combined with delicacy of taste; and there is in poetry a province which Aristotle himself may never have entered.

THE REWARDS OF ORIENTAL STUDENTS.

At a time when oriental studies were in their infancy in this country, Simon Ockley, animated by the illustrious example of Pococke, and the laborious diligence of Prideaux, devoted his life and his fortune to these novel researches, which necessarily involved both. With that enthusiasm which the ancient votary experienced, and with that patient suffering the modern martyr has endured, he pursued, till he accomplished, the useful object of his labours. He, perhaps, was the first who exhibited to us other heroes than those of Rome and Greece; sages as contemplative, and a people more magnificent even than the iron masters of the world. Among other oriental productions, his most considerable is "The History of the Saracens." The first volume appeared in 1708, and the second ten years afterwards. In the preface to the last volume, the oriental student pathetically counts over his sorrows, and triumphs over his disappointments; the most remarkable part is the date of the place from whence this preface was written—he triumphantly closes his labours in the confinement of Cambridge Castle for debt!

Ockley, lamenting his small proficiency in the Persian studies, resolves to attain to them:—

"How often have I endeavoured to perfect myself in that language, but my malignant and envious stars still frustrated my attempts; but they shall sooner alter their courses than extinguish my resolution of quenching that thirst, which the little I have had of it hath already excited."

And he states the deficiencies of his history with the most natural modesty:—

"Had I not been forced to snatch everything that I have, as it were, out of the fire, our Saracen

history should have been ushered into the world after a different manner." He is fearful that something would be ascribed to his indolence or negligence, that "ought more justly to be attributed to the influence of inexorable necessity. Could I have been master of my own time and circumstances?"

Shame on those pretended patrons who, appointing "a professor of the oriental languages," counteract the purpose of the professorship by their utter neglect of the professor, whose stipend cannot keep him on the spot where only he ought to dwell. And Ockley complains also of that hypocritical curiosity which pretends to take an interest in things it cares little about; perpetually inquiring, as soon as a work is announced, when it is to come out. But these Pharisees of literature, who can only build sepulchres to ancient prophets, never believe in a living one. Some of these, Ockley met with on the publication of his first volume: they run it down as the strangest story they had ever heard; they had never met with such folks as the Arabians! "A reverend dignitary asked me, if, when I wrote that book, I had not lately been reading the history of Oliver Cromwell?" Such was the plaudit the oriental student received, and returned to grow pale over his MSS. But when Petis de la Croix, observes Ockley, was pursuing the same track of study, in the patronage of Louis XIV., he found books, leisure, and encouragement; and when the great Colbert desired him to compose the life of Genkis Chan, he considered a period of ten years not too much to be allowed the author. And then Ockley proceeds:—

"But my unhappy condition hath always been widely different from anything that could admit of such an exactness. Fortune seems only to have given me a taste of it out of spite, on purpose that I might regret the loss of it."

He describes his two journeys to Oxford, for his first volume; but in his second, matters fared worse with him:

"Either my domestic affairs were grown much worse, or I less able to bear them; or what is more probable, both."

Ingenuous confession! fruits of a life devoted in its struggles, to important literature! and we murmur when genius is irritable, and erudition is morose! But let us proceed with Ockley:

"I was forced to take the advantage of the slumber of my cares, that never slept when I was awake; and if they did not incessantly interrupt my studies, were sure to succeed them with no less constancy than night doth the day."

This is the cry of agony. He who reads this without sympathy, ought to reject these volumes as the idlest he ever read; and honour me with his contempt. The close of Ockley's preface shows a love-like tenderness for his studies; although he must quit life without bringing them to perfection, he opens his soul to posterity, and tells them, in the language of prophecy, that if they will bestow encouragement on our youth, the misfortunes he has described will be remedied. He, indeed, was aware that these students—

"Will hardly come in upon the prospect of finding leisure, in a prison, to transcribe those papers for the press which they have collected with indefatigable labour, and oftentimes at the expense of their rest, and all the other conveniences of life, for the service of the public."

Yet the exulting martyr of literature, at the moment he is fast bound to the stake, does not consider a prison so dreadful a reward for literary labours.—

"I can assure them, from my own experience, that I have enjoyed more true liberty, more happy leisure, and more solid repose in six months here, than in thrice the same number of years before. Evil is the condition of that historian who undertakes to write the lives of others, before he knows how to live himself. Yet I have no just reason to be angry with the world; I never stood in need of its assistance in my life, but I found it always very liberal of its advice; for which I am so much the more beholden to it, by how much the more I did always in my judgment give the possession of wisdom the preference to that of riches*."

* Dr. Edmund Castell offers a remarkable instance to illustrate our present investigation. He more than devoted his life to his "Lexicon Heptaglotton." It is not possible, if there are tears that are to be bestowed on the afflictions of learned men, to read his pathetic address to Charles II., and forbear them. He laments the seventeen years of incredible pains, during which he thought himself idle when he had not devoted sixteen or eighteen hours a day to this labour; that he had expended all his inheritance (it is said more than twelve thousand pounds); that it had broken his constitution, and left him blind as well as poor. When this invaluable Polyglott was published, the copies remained unsold in his hands; for the learned Castell had anticipated the curiosity and knowledge of the public by a full century. He had so completely devoted himself to Oriental studies, that they had a very remarkable consequence, for he had totally forgotten his own language, and could scarcely spell a single word. This appears in some of his English letters, preserved by Mr. Nichols in his valuable "Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century," vol. iv. Five hundred of these Lexicons, unsold at the time of his death, were placed, by Dr. Castell's niece, in a room so little regarded, that scarcely one complete copy escaped the rats, and "the whole load of learned rags sold only for seven pounds." The work at this moment would find purchasers, I believe, at forty or fifty pounds.—The learned Sale, who first gave the world a genuine version of the Koran, and who had so zealously laboured in forming that

Poor Ockley, always a student, and rarely what is called a man of the world, once encountered a literary calamity which frequently occurs when an author finds himself among the vapid triflers and the polished cynics of the fashionable circle. Something like a patron he found in Harley, the Earl of Oxford, and once had the unlucky honour of dining at the table of my Lord Treasurer. It is probable that Ockley, from retired habits and severe studies, was not at all accomplished in the *suaviter in modo*, of which greater geniuses than Ockley have so surlily despaired. How he behaved I cannot narrate; probably he delivered himself with as great simplicity at the table of the Lord Treasurer, as on the wrong side of Cambridge Castle gate. The embarrassment this simplicity drew him into, is very fully stated in the following copious apology he addressed to the Earl of Oxford, which I have transcribed from the original; perhaps it may be a useful memorial to some men of letters as little polished as the learned Ockley:—

"*Cambridge, July* 15, 1714.

"My Lord,

"I was so struck with horror and amazement two days ago, that I cannot possibly express it. A friend of mine showed me a letter, part of the contents of which were, 'That Professor Ockley had given such extreme offence by some uncourtly answers to some gentlemen at my Lord Treasurer's table, that it would be in vain to make any further application to him.'

"My Lord, it is impossible for me to recollect, at this distance of time. All that I can say is this: that, as on the one side for a man to come to his patron's table with a design to affront either him or his friends, supposes him a perfect natural, a mere idiot; so on the other side it would be extreme severe, if a person whose education was far distant from the politeness of a court, should, upon the account of an unguarded expression, or some little inadvertency in his behaviour, suffer a capital sentence.

"Which is my case, if I have forfeited your Lordship's favour; which God forbid! That man is involved in double ruin that is not only forsaken by his friend, but, which is the unavoidable consequence, exposed to the malice and contempt, not only of enemies, but, what is still more grievous, of all sorts of fools.

"It is not the talent of every well-meaning man to converse with his superiors with due decorum; for, either when he reflects upon the vast distance of their station above his own, he is struck dumb and almost insensible; or else their condescension and courtly behaviour encourages him to be too familiar. To steer exactly between these two extremes requires not only a good intention, but presence of mind, and long custom.

"Another article in my friend's letter was, 'That somebody had informed your Lordship, that I was a very sot.' When first I had the honour to be known to your Lordship, I could easily foresee that there would be persons enough that would envy me upon that account, and do what in them lay to traduce me. Let Haman enjoy never so much himself, it is all nothing, it does him no good, till poor Mordecai is hanged out of his way.

"But I never feared the being censured upon that account. Here in the University, I converse with none but persons of the most distinguished reputations both for learning and virtue, and receive from them daily as great marks of respect and esteem, which I should not have, if that imputation were true. It is most certain that I do indulge myself the freedom of drinking a cheerful cup, at proper seasons, among my friends; but no otherwise than is done by thousands of honest men who never forfeit their character by it. And whoever doth no more than so, deserves no more to be called a sot, than a man that eats a hearty meal would be willing to be called a glutton.

"As for those detractors, if I have but the least assurance of your Lordship's favour, I can very easily despise them. They are *Nati consumere fruges*. They need not trouble themselves about what other people do; for whatever they eat and drink, it is only robbing the poor. Resigning myself entirely to your Lordship's goodness and pardon, I conclude this necessary apology with like provocation, That *I would be content he should take my character from any person that had a good one of his own.*

"I am, with all submission,

"My Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient, &c.

"Simon Ockley."

To the honour of the Earl of Oxford, this unlucky piece of awkwardness at table, in giving "uncourtly answers," did not interrupt his regard for the poor Oriental student; for several years afterwards the correspondence of Ockley was still acceptable to the Earl.

If the letters of the widows and children of many of our eminent authors were collected, they

"Universal History" which was the pride of our country, pursued his studies through a life of want—and this great Orientalist, (I grieve to degrade the memoirs of a man of learning by such mortifications,) when he quitted his studies too often wanted a change of linen, and often wandered in the streets in search of some compassionate friend who would supply him with the meal of the day!

would demonstrate the great fact, that the man who is a husband or a father ought not to be an author. They might weary with a monotonous cry, and usually would be dated from the gaol or the garret. I have seen an original letter from the widow of Ockley to the Earl of Oxford, in which she lays before him the deplorable situation of her affairs; the debts of the Professor being beyond what his effects amounted to, the severity of the creditors would not even suffer the executor to make the best of his effects; the widow remained destitute of necessaries, incapable of assisting her children *.

Thus students have devoted their days to studies worthy of a student. They are public benefactors, yet find no friend in the public, who cannot yet appreciate their value—Ministers of state know it, though they have rarely protected them. Ockley, by letters I have seen, was frequently employed by Bolingbroke to translate letters from the Sovereign of Morocco to our court; yet all the debts for which he was imprisoned in Cambridge castle did not exceed two hundred pounds. The public interest is concerned in stimulating such enthusiasts; they are men who cannot be salaried, who cannot be created by letters patent; for they are men who infuse their soul into their studies, and breathe their fondness for them in their last agonies. Yet such are doomed to feel their life pass away like a painful dream!

Those who know the value of LIGHTFOOT'S Hebraic studies, may be startled at the impediments which seem to have annihilated them. In the following effusion he confides his secret agitation to his friend Buxtorf: "A few years since I prepared a little commentary on the first epistle to the Corinthians, in the same style and manner as I had done that on Matthew. But it laid by me two years or more, nor can I now publish it, but at my own charges and to my great damage, which I felt enough and too much in the edition of my book upon Mark. Some progress I have made in the gospel of St. Luke, but I can print nothing but at my own cost; thereupon I wholly give myself to reading, scarce thinking of writing more: for booksellers and printers have dulled my edge, who will print no book, especially Latin, unless they have an assured and considerable gain."

These writings and even the fragments have been justly appreciated by posterity, and a recent edition of all Lightfoot's works in many volumes have received honours which their despairing author never contemplated.

DANGER INCURRED BY GIVING THE RESULT OF LITERARY ENQUIRIES.

AN author occupies a critical situation, for, while he is presenting the world with the result of his profound studies and his honest enquiries, it may prove pernicious to himself. By it he may incur the risk of offending the higher powers, and witnessing his own days embittered. Liable, by his moderation or his discoveries, by his scruples or his assertions, by his adherence to truth, or by the curiosity of his speculations, to be persecuted by two opposite parties, even when the accusations of the one necessarily nullify the other; such an author will be fortunate to be permitted to retire out of the circle of the bad passions; but he crushes in silence and voluntary obscurity all future efforts—and thus the nation lose a valued author.

This case is exemplified by the history of Dr. COWEL'S curious work "The Interpreter." The book itself is a treasure of our antiquities, illustrating our national manners. The author was devoted to his studies, and the merits of his work recommended him to the Archbishop of Canterbury; in the Ecclesiastical Court he practised as a civilian, and became there eminent as a judge.

Cowel gave his work with all the modesty of true learning; for who knows his deficiencies so well in the subject on which he has written, as that author who knows most? It is delightful to listen to the simplicity and force with which an author in the reign of our first James opens himself without reserve.

"My true end is the advancement of knowledge; and therefore have I published this poor work, not only to impart the good thereof to those young ones that want it, but also to draw from the learned the supply of my defects. Whosoever will charge these my travels [labours] with many over-sights, he shall need no solemn pains to prove them. And upon the view taken of this book sithence the impression, I dare assure them that shall observe most faults therein, that I, by gleaning after him, will gather as many omitted by him, as he shall show committed by me. What a man saith well is not, however, to be rejected because he hath some errors; reprehend who will,

* The following are extracts from Ockley's letters to the Earl of Oxford, which I copy from the originals:—

"*Cambridge Castle, May* 2, 1717.

"I am here in the prison for debt, which must needs be an unavoidable consequence of the distractions in my family. I enjoy more repose, indeed, here, than I have tasted these many years, but the circumstance of a family oblige me to go out as soon as I can."

"*Cambridge, Sept.* 7, 1717.

"I have at last found leisure in my confinement to finish my Saracen history, which I might have hoped for in vain in my perplexed circumstances."

in God's name, that is, with sweetness and without reproach. So shall he reap hearty thanks at my hands, and thus more soundly help in a few months, than I by tossing and tumbling my books at home, could possibly have done in many years."

This extract discovers Cowel's amiable character as an author. But he was not fated to receive "sweetness without reproach."

Cowel encountered an unrelenting enemy in Sir Edward Coke, the famous attorney-general of James I., the commentator of Littleton. As a man, his name ought to arouse our indignation, for his licentious tongue, his fierce brutality, and his cold and tasteless genius. He whose vileness could even ruffle the great spirit of Rawleigh, was the shameless persecutor of the learned Cowel.

Coke was the oracle of the common law, and Cowel of the civil; but Cowel practised at Westminster Hall, as well as at Doctors' Commons. Coke turned away, with hatred, from an advocate who, with the skill of a great lawyer, exerted all the courage. The attorney-general sought every occasion to degrade him, and, with puerile derision, attempted to fasten on Dr. Cowel the nickname of *Dr. Cowheel.* Coke, after having written in his Reports whatever he could against our author, with no effect, started a new project. Coke well knew his master's jealousy on the question of his prerogative; and he touched the King on that nerve. The attorney-general suggested to James that Cowel had discussed "too nicely the mysteries of his monarchy, in some points derogatory to the supreme power of his crown; asserting that the royal prerogative was in some cases limited." So subtly the serpent whispered to the feminine ear of a monarch, whom this vanity of royalty startled with all the fears of a woman. This suggestion had nearly occasioned the ruin of Cowel—it verged on treason; and if the conspiracy of Coke now failed, it was through the mediation of the archbishop, who influenced the King; but it succeeded in alienating the royal favour from Cowel.

When Coke found he could not hang Cowel for treason, it was only a small disappointment, for he had hopes to secure his prey by involving him in felony. As physicians in desperate cases sometimes reverse their mode of treatment, so Coke now operated on an opposite principle. He procured a party in the Commons to declare that Cowel was a betrayer of the rights and liberties of the people; that he had asserted the King was independent of Parliament, and that it was a favour to admit the consent of his subjects in giving of subsidies, &c.; and, in a word, that he drew his arguments from the Roman Imperial Code, and would make the laws and customs of Rome and Constantinople, those of London and York. Passages were wrested to Coke's design. The prefacer of Cowel's book very happily expresses himself when he says, "When a suspected book is brought to the torture, it often confesseth all, and more than it knows."

The Commons proceeded criminally against Cowel; and it is said his life was required, had not the King interposed. The author was imprisoned, and the book was burnt.

On this occasion was issued "a proclamation, touching Dr. Cowel's book, called The Interpreter." It may be classed among the most curious documents of our literary history. I do not hesitate to consider this proclamation as the composition of James I.

I will preserve some passages from this proclamation, not merely for their majestic composition, which may still be admired, and the singularity of the ideas, which may still be applied—but for the literary event to which it gave birth, in the appointment of a royal licenser for the press.—Proclamations and burning of books are the strong efforts of a weak government, exciting rather than suppressing public attention.

"This later age and times of the world wherein we are fallen, is so much given to verbal profession, as well of religion as of all commendable royal virtues, but wanting the actions and deeds agreeable to so specious a profession; as it hath bred such an unsatiable curiosity in many men's spirits, and such an itching in the tongues and pens of most men, as nothing is left unsearched to the bottom, both in talking and writing. For, from the very highest mysteries in the Godhead, and the most inscrutable counsels in the Trinity, to the very lowest pit of hell, and the confused actions of the devils there, there is nothing now unsearched into by the curiosity of men's brains. Men, not being contented with the knowledge of so much of the will of God as it hath pleased him to reveal; but they will needs sit with him in his most private closet, and become privy of his most inscrutable counsels. And, therefore, it is no wonder that men, in these our days, do not spare to wade in all the deepest mysteries that belong to the persons or state of kings and princes, that are gods upon earth; since we see (as we have already said) that they spare not God himself. And this licence, which every talker or writer now assumeth to himself, is come to this abuse; that many Phormios will give counsel to Hannibal, and many men that never went of the compass of cloysters or colleges, will freely wade, by their writings, in the deepest mysteries of monarchy and politick government. Whereupon it cannot otherwise fall out, but that when men go out of their element, and meddle with things above their capacity, themselves shall not only go astray and stumble

in darkness, but will mislead also divers others with themselves into many mistakings and errors; the proof whereof we have lately had by a book written by Dr. Cowel, called The Interpreter."

The royal reviewer then in a summary way shows how Cowel had, "by meddling in matters beyond his reach, fallen into many things to mistake and deceive himself." The book is therefore "prohibited; the buying, uttering, or reading it;" and those "who have any copies are to deliver the same presently upon this publication to the Mayor of London," &c., and the proclamation concludes with instituting licensers of the press:—

"Because that there shall be better oversight of books of all sorts before they come to the press, we have resolved to make choice of commissioners, that shall look more narrowly into the nature of all those things that shall be put to the press, and from whom a more strict account shall be yielded unto us, than hath been used heretofore."

What were the feelings of our injured author, whose integrity was so firm, and whose love of study was so warm, when he reaped for his reward the displeasure of his sovereign, and the indignation of his countrymen—accused at once of contradictory crimes, he could not be a betrayer of the rights of the people, and at the same time limit the sovereign power. Cowel retreated to his college, and, like a wise man, abstained from the press; he pursued his private studies, while his inoffensive life was a comment on Coke's inhumanity, more honourable to Cowel than any of Coke's on Littleton.

Thus Cowel saw, in his own life, its richest labour thrown aside; and when the author and his adversary were no more, it became a treasure valued by posterity! It was printed in the reign of Charles I., under the administration of Cromwell, and again after the Restoration. It received the honour of a foreign edition. Its value is still permanent. Such is the history of a book, which occasioned the disgrace of its author, and embittered his life.

A similar calamity was the fate of honest Stowe, the Chronicler. After a long life of labour, and having exhausted his patrimony in the study of English Antiquities, from a reverential love to his country, poor Stowe was ridiculed, calumniated, neglected, and persecuted. One cannot read without indignation and pity what Howes, his continuator, tells us in his dedication. Howes had observed that—

"No man would lend a helping hand to the ate aged painful Chronicler, nor, after his death, prosecute his work. He applied himself to several persons of dignity and learning, whose names had got forth among the public as likely to be the continuators of Stowe; but every one persisted in denying this, and some imagined that their secret enemies had mentioned their names with a view of injuring them, by incurring the displeasure of their superiors, and risking their own quiet. One said, 'I will *not flatter*, to scandalise my posterity;' another, 'I cannot see how a man should spend his labour and money worse than in that which acquires no regard nor reward except *backbiting* and *detraction*.' One swore a great oath, and said, 'I thank God that I am not yet so mad to waste my time, spend two hundred pounds a year, trouble myself and all my friends, only to give assurance of endless reproach, loss of liberty, and bring all my days in question.'"

Unhappy authors! are such then the terrors which silence eloquence, and such the dangers which environ truth? Posterity has many discoveries to make, or many deceptions to endure! But we are treading on hot embers.

Such too was the fate of Reginald Scot, who, in an elaborate and curious volume*, if he could not stop the torrent of the popular superstitions of witchcraft, was the first, at least, to break and scatter the waves. It is a work which forms an epoch in the history of the human mind in our country; but the author had anticipated a very remote period of its enlargement. Scot, the apostle of humanity, and the legislator of reason, lived in retirement, yet persecuted by religious credulity and legal cruelty.

Selden, perhaps the most learned of our antiquaries, was often led, in his curious investigations, to disturb his own peace, by giving the result of his enquiries. James I. and the Court party were willing enough to extol his profound authorities and reasonings, on topics which did not interfere with their system of arbitrary power; but they harassed and persecuted the author whom they would at other times eagerly quote as their advocate. Selden, in his "History of Tithes," had alarmed the clergy by the intricacy of his enquiries. He pretends, however, to have only collected the opposite opinions of others, without delivering his own. The book was not only suppressed, but the great author was further disgraced by subscribing a gross recantation of all his learned investigations—and was compelled to receive in

* "The Discoverie of Witchcraft, necessary to be known for the undeceiving of Judges, Justices, and Juries, and for the Preservation of Poor People. Third edition, 1665." This was about the time that, according to Arnot's Scots Trials, the expenses of burning a witch amounted to ninety-two pounds fourteen shillings, Scots. The unfortunate old woman cost two trees, and employed two men to watch her closely for thirty days! One ought to recollect the past follies of humanity, to detect, perhaps, some existing ones.

silence the insults of courtly scholars, who had the hardihood to accuse him of plagiarism, and other literary treasons, which more sensibly hurt Selden than the recantation extorted from his hand by "the Lords of the High Commission Court." James I. would not suffer him to reply to them.—When the King desired Selden to show the right of the British Crown to the dominion of the sea, this learned author having made proper collections, Selden, angried at an imprisonment he had undergone, refused to publish the work. A great author like Selden degrades himself when any personal feeling, in literary disputes, places him on an equality with any King; the duty was to his country.—But Selden, alive to the call of rival genius, when Grotius published, in Holland, his *Mare liberum*, gave the world his *Mare clausum*; when Selden had to encounter Grotius, and to proclaim to the universe "the Sovereignty of the Seas," how contemptible to him appeared the mean persecutions of a crowned head, and how little his own meaner resentment!

To this subject the fate of Dr. HAWKESWORTH is somewhat allied. It is well known that this author, having distinguished himself by his pleasing compositions in the "Adventurer," was chosen to draw up the narrative of Cook's discoveries in the South Seas. The pictures of a new world, the description of new manners in an original state of society, and the incidents arising from an adventure which could find no parallel in the annals of mankind, but under the solitary genius of Columbus—all these were conceived to offer a history, to which the moral and contemplative powers of Hawkesworth only were equal. Our author's fate, and that of his work, are known: he incurred all the danger of giving the result of his enquiries; he indulged his imagination till it burst into pruriency, and discussed moral theorems till he ceased to be moral. The shock it gave to the feelings of our author was fatal; and the error of a mind, intent on enquiries which, perhaps, he thought innocent, and which the world condemned as criminal, terminated in death itself. Hawkesworth was a vain man, and proud of having raised himself by his literary talents from his native obscurity: of no learning, he drew all his science from the Cyclopædia; and, I have heard, could not always have construed the Latin mottos of his own paper, which were furnished by Johnson; but his sensibility was abundant—and ere his work was given to the world he felt those tremblings, and those doubts, which anticipated his fate. That he was in a state of mental agony respecting the reception of his opinions, and some other parts of his work, will, I think, be discovered in the following letter, hitherto unpublished. It was addressed, with his MSS., to a Peer, to be examined before they were sent to the press—an occupation probably rather too serious for the noble critic:—

"*London, March* 2, 1761.

"I think myself happy to be permitted to put *my MSS. into your Lordship's hands*, because, though it increases my anxiety and my fears, yet it will at least secure me from what I should think *a far greater misfortune* than any other that can attend my performance, *the danger of addressing to the King any sentiment, allusion, or opinion*, that could make such an address *improper*.—I have now the honour to submit the *work* to your Lordship, with the dedication; from which the duty I owe to his Majesty, and, if I may be permitted to add anything to that, the duty I owe to myself, have concurred to exclude the servile, extravagant, and indiscriminate adulation, which has so often disgraced alike those by whom it has been given and received. I remain," &c. &c.

This elegant epistle justly describes that delicacy in style, which has been so rarely practised by an indiscriminate dedicator; and it not less feelingly touches on that "far greater misfortune than any other," which finally overwhelmed the fortitude and intellect of this unhappy author!

A NATIONAL WORK WHICH COULD FIND NO PATRONAGE.

THE author who is now before us is DE LOLME! I shall consider as an English author that foreigner, who flew to our country as the asylum of Europe, who composed a noble work on our Constitution, and, having imbibed its spirit, acquired even the language of a free country.

I do not know an example in our literary history that so loudly accuses our tardy and phlegmatic feeling respecting authors, as the treatment De Lolme experienced in this country. His book on our Constitution still enters into the studies of an English patriot, and is not the worse for flattering and elevating the imagination, painting everything beautiful, to encourage our love as well as our reverence for the most perfect system of governments. It was a noble as well as ingenious effort in a foreigner—it claimed national attention—but could not obtain even individual patronage. The fact is mortifying to record, that the author who wanted every aid, received less encouragement than if he had solicited subscriptions for a raving novel, or an idle poem. De Lolme was compelled to traffic with booksellers for this work; and, as he was a theoretical rather than a practical politician, he was a bad trader, and acquired the smallest remuneration. He

lived, in the country to which he had rendered a national service, in extreme obscurity and decay; and the walls of the Fleet too often enclosed the English Montesquieu. He never appears to have received a solitary attention*, and became so disgusted with authorship, that he preferred silently to endure its poverty rather than its other vexations. He ceased almost to write. Of De Lolme I have heard little recorded but his high-mindedness; a strong sense that he stood degraded beneath that rank in society which his book entitled him to enjoy. The cloud of poverty that covered him only veiled without concealing its object; with the manners and dress of a decayed gentleman, he still showed the few who met him that he cherished a spirit perpetually at variance with the adversity of his circumstances.

Our author, in a narrative prefixed to his work, is the proud historian of his own injured feelings; he smiled in bitterness on his contemporaries, confident it was a tale reserved for posterity.

After having written the work whose systematic principles refuted those political notions which prevailed at the era of the American revolution,—and whose truth has been so fatally demonstrated in our own times, in two great revolutions, which have shown all the defects and all the mischief of nations rushing into a state of freedom before they are worthy of it,—the author candidly acknowledges he counted on some sort of encouragement, and little expected to find the mere publication had drawn him into great inconvenience.

"When my enlarged English edition was ready for the press, had I acquainted ministers that I was preparing to boil my tea-kettle with it, for want of being able to afford the expenses of printing it;" ministers, it seems, would not have considered that he was lighting his fire with "myrrh, and cassia, and precious ointment."

In the want of encouragement from great men, and even from booksellers, De Lolme had recourse to a subscription; and his account of the manner he was received, and the indignities he endured, all which are narrated with great simplicity, show that whatever his knowledge of our Constitution might be, "his knowledge of the country was, at that time, very incomplete." At length, when he shared the profits of his work with the booksellers, they were "but scanty and slow." After all, our author sarcastically congratulates himself, that he—

"Was allowed to carry on the above business of selling my book, without any objection being formed against me, from my not having served a regular apprenticeship, and without being molested by the inquisition."

And further he adds,—

"Several authors have chosen to relate, in writings published after death, the personal advantages by which their performances had been followed; as for me, I have thought otherwise—and I will see it printed while I am yet living."

This, indeed, is the language of irritation! and De Lolme degrades himself in the loudness of his complaint. But if the philosopher lost his temper, that misfortune will not take away the dishonour of the occasion that produced it. The country's shame is not lessened because the author who had raised its glory throughout Europe, and instructed the nation in its best lesson, grew indignant at the ingratitude of his pupil. De Lolme ought not to have congratulated himself that he had been allowed the liberty of the press unharassed by an inquisition—this sarcasm is senseless! or his book is a mere fiction!

* Except from the hand of literary charity; he was more than once relieved by the Literary Fund. Such are the authors only whom it is wise to patronise.

THE MISERIES OF SUCCESSFUL AUTHORS.

Hume is an author so celebrated, a philosopher so serene, and a man so extremely amiable, if not fortunate, that we may be surprised to meet his name inscribed in a catalogue of literary calamities. Look into his literary life, and you will discover that the greater portion was mortified and angried; and that the stoic so lost his temper, that had not circumstances intervened which did not depend on himself, Hume had abandoned his country and changed his name!

"The first success of most of my writings was not such as to be an object of vanity." His "Treatise of Human Nature" fell dead-born from the press. It was cast anew with another title, and was at first little more successful. The following letter to Des Maiseaux, which I believe is now first published, gives us the feelings of the youthful and modest philosopher:—

"*David Hume to Des Maiseaux.*

"Sir,

"Whenever you see my name, you'll readily imagine the subject of my letter. A young author can scarce forbear speaking of his performance to all the world; but when he meets with one that is a good judge, and whose instruction and advice he depends on, there ought some indulgence to be given him. You were so good as to promise me, that if you could find leisure from your other occupations, you would look over my system of philosophy, and at the same time ask the opinion of such of your acquaintance as you thought

proper judges. Have you found it sufficiently intelligible? Does it appear true to you? Do the style and language seem tolerable? These three questions comprehend every thing; and I beg of you to answer them with the utmost freedom and sincerity. I know 'tis a custom to flatter Poets on their performances, but I hope Philosophers may be exempted; and the more so that their cases are by no means alike: when we do not approve of any thing in a Poet we commonly can give no reason for our dislikes but our particular taste; which not being convincing, we think it better to conceal our sentiments altogether. But every error in Philosophy can be distinctly markt and proved to be such; and this is a favour I flatter myself you'll indulge me in with regard to the performance I put into your hands. I am, indeed, afraid, that it would be too great a trouble for you to mark all the Errors you have observed: I shall only insist upon being informed of the most material of them, and you may assure yourself will consider it as a singular favour.—I am, with great esteem,

"Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"*Aprile* 6, 1739. "DAVID HUME.

"Please direct to me at Ninewells, near Berwick upon Tweed."

Hume's own favourite "Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals" came unnoticed and unobserved in the world. When he published the first portion of his "History," which made even Hume himself sanguine in his expectations,—he tells his own tale:—

"I thought that I was the only historian that had at once neglected present power, interest, and authority, and the cry of popular prejudices; and, as the subject was suited to every capacity, I expected proportional applause. But miserable was my disappointment! All classes of men and readers united in their rage against him who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I. and the Earl of Strafford." "What was still more mortifying, the book seemed to sink into oblivion, and in a twelvemonth not more than forty-five copies were sold."

Even Hume, a stoic hitherto in his literary character, was struck down, and dismayed—he lost all courage to proceed—and, had the war not prevented him, "he had resolved to change his name, and never more to have returned to his native country."

But an author, though born to suffer martyrdom, does not always expire; he may be flayed like St. Bartholomew, and yet he can breathe without a skin; stoned, like St. Stephen, and yet write on with a broken head; and he has been even known to survive the flames, notwithstanding the most precious part of an author, which is obviously his book, has been burnt in an *auto da fe*. Hume once more tried the press in "The Natural History of Religion." It proved but another martyrdom! Still was the *fall* (as he terms it) of the first volume of his History haunting his nervous imagination, when he found himself yet strong enough to hold a pen in his hand, and ventured to produce a second, which "helped to buoy up its unfortunate brother." But the third part, containing the reign of Elizabeth, was particularly obnoxious, and he was doubtful whether he was again to be led to the stake. But Hume, a little hardened by a little success, grew, to use his own words, "callous against the impressions of public folly," and completed his History, which was now received "with tolerable, and but tolerable, success."

At length, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, our author began, a year or two before he died, as he writes, to see "many *symptoms* of my literary reputation, breaking out *at last* with additional lustre, though I know that I can have but few years to enjoy it." What a provoking consolation for a philosopher, who, according to the result of his own system, was close upon a state of annihilation!

To Hume, let us add the illustrious name of DRYDEN.

It was after preparing a second edition of Virgil, that the great Dryden, who had lived, and was to die in harness, found himself still obliged to seek for daily bread. Scarcely relieved from one heavy task, he was compelled to hasten to another; and his efforts were now stimulated by a domestic feeling, the expected return of his son in ill-health from Rome. In a letter to his bookseller he pathetically writes, "if it please God that *I must die of overstudy*, I cannot spend my life better than in preserving his." It was on this occasion, on the verge of his seventieth year, as he describes himself in the dedication of his Virgil, that, "worn out with study, and oppressed with fortune," he contracted to supply the bookseller with 10,000 verses at sixpence a line!

What was his entire dramatic life, but a series of vexation and hostility, from his first play to his last? On those very boards whence Dryden was to have derived the means of his existence and his fame, he saw his foibles aggravated, and his morals aspersed. Overwhelmed by the keen ridicule of Buckingham, and maliciously mortified by the triumph which Settle, his meanest rival, was allowed to obtain over him—and doomed still to encounter the cool malignant eye of Langbaine, who read poetry only to detect plagiarism. Contemporary genius is inspected with too much

familiarity to be felt with reverence; and the angry prefaces of Dryden only excited the little revenge of the wits. How could such sympathise with injured, but with lofty feelings? They spread two reports of him, which may not be true, but which hurt him with the public. It was said that, being jealous of the success of Creech, for his version of Lucretius, he advised him to attempt Horace, in which Dryden knew he would fail—and a contemporary haunter of the theatre, in a curious letter * on "The Winter Diversions," says of Congreve's angry preface to the "Double Dealer," that—

"The critics were severe upon this play, which gave the author occasion to lash them in his epistle dedicatory—so that 'tis generally thought *he has done his business, and lost himself;* a thing he owes to Mr. Dryden's *treacherous friendship*, who, being *jealous of the applause* he had got by his 'Old Bachelor,' *deluded him* into a foolish imitation of his own way of writing angry prefaces."

This lively critic is still more vivacious on the great Dryden, who had then produced his "Love Triumphant," which, the critic says,

"Was damned by the universal cry of the town, *nemine contradicente* but the *conceited poet.* He says in his prologue, that 'this is the last the town must expect from him:' he had done himself a kindness had he taken his leave before." He then describes the success of Southerne's "Fatal Marriage, or the Innocent Adultery;" and concludes, "This kind usage will encourage desponding minor poets, and *vex huffing Dryden and Congreve to madness.*"

I have quoted thus much of this letter, that we may have before us a true image of those feelings which contemporaries entertain of the greater geniuses of their age; how they seek to level them; and in what manner men of genius are doomed to be treated—slighted, starved, and abused. Dryden and Congreve! the one the finest genius, the other the most exquisite wit of our nation, are to be *vexed to madness!*—their failures are not to excite sympathy, but contempt or ridicule! How the feelings and the language of contemporaries differ from that of posterity! And yet let *us* not exult in our purer and more dignified feelings—*we* are, indeed, the *posterity* of Dryden and Congreve; but we are the *contemporaries* of others who must patiently hope for better treatment from our sons than they have received from the fathers.

Dryden was no master of the pathetic, yet never were compositions more pathetic than the Prefaces this great man has transmitted to posterity! Opening all the feelings of his heart, we live among his domestic sorrows. Johnson censures Dryden for saying *he has few thanks to pay his stars that he was born among Englishmen*†. We have just seen that Hume went farther, and sighed to fly to a retreat beyond that country which knew not to reward genius.—What, if Dryden felt the dignity of that character he supported, dare we blame his frankness? If the age be ungenerous, shall contemporaries escape the scourge of the great author, who feels he is addressing another age more favourable to him?

Johnson, too, notices his "Self-commendation; his diligence in reminding the world of his merits, and expressing, with very little scruple, his high opinion of his own powers." Dryden shall answer in his own words; with all the simplicity of Montaigne, he expresses himself with the dignity that would have become Milton or Gray:—

"It is a vanity common to all writers to overvalue their own productions; and it is better for me to own this failing in myself, than the world to do it for me. *For what other reason have I spent my life in such an unprofitable study? Why am I grown old in seeking so barren a reward as fame?* The same parts and application which have made me a poet, might have raised me to any honours of the gown, which are often given to men of as little learning, and less honesty, than myself."

How feelingly Whitehead paints the situation of Dryden in his old age:—

"Yet lives the man, how wild soe'er his aim,
Would madly barter fortune's smiles for fame?
Well pleas'd to shine, through each recording page,
The hapless Dryden of a shameless age!
"Ill-fated bard! where'er thy name appears,
The weeping verse a sad memento bears;
Ah! what avail'd the enormous blaze between
Thy dawn of glory and thy closing scene!
When sinking nature asks our kind repairs,
Unstrung the nerves, and silver'd o'er the hairs;
When stay'd reflection came uncall'd at last,
And gray experience counts each folly past!"

Mickle's version of the Lusiad offers an affecting instance of the melancholy fears which often accompany the progress of works of magnitude, undertaken by men of genius. Five years he had buried himself in a farm-house, devoted to the solitary labour; and he closes his preface with the fragment of a poem, whose stanzas have perpetuated all the tremblings and the emotions, whose

* A letter found among the papers of the late Mr. Windham, which Mr. Malone has preserved.

† There is an affecting *remonstrance* of Dryden to Hyde, Earl of Rochester, on the state of his poverty and neglect—in which is this remarkable passage:—"It is enough for one age to have *neglected* Mr. Cowley, and *starved* Mr. Butler."

unhappy influence the author had experienced through the long work. Thus pathetically he addresses the Muse:—

"—Well thy meed repays thy worthless toil;
Upon thy houseless head pale want descends
In bitter shower; and taunting Scorn still rends
And wakes thee trembling from thy golden dream:
In vetchy bed, or loathly dungeon ends
Thy idled life——"

And when, at length, the great and anxious labour was completed, the author was still more unhappy than under the former influence of his foreboding terrors. The work is dedicated to the Duke of Buccleugh. Whether his Grace had been prejudiced against the poetical labour by Adam Smith, who had as little comprehension of the nature of poetry as becomes a political economist, or from whatever cause, after possessing it for six weeks the Duke had never condescended to open the volume. It is to the honour of Mickle that the Dedication is a simple respectful inscription, in which the poet had not compromised his dignity,—and that in the second edition he had the magnanimity not to withdraw the dedication to this statue-like patron. Neither was the critical reception of this splendid labour of five devoted years grateful to the sensibility of the author: he writes to a friend—

"Though my work is well received at Oxford, I will honestly own to you, some things have hurt me. A few grammatical slips in the introduction have been mentioned; and some things in the notes about Virgil, Milton, and Homer, have been called the arrogance of criticism. But the greatest offence of all is, what I say of blank verse."

He was, indeed, after this great work was given to the public, as unhappy as at any preceding period of his life; and Mickle too, like Hume and Dryden, could feel a wish to forsake his native land! He still found his "head houseless;" and "the vetchy bed" and "loathly dungeon" still haunted his dreams. "To write for the booksellers is what I never will do," exclaimed this man of genius, though struck by poverty. He projected an edition of his own poems by subscription.

"Desirous of giving an edition of my works, in which I shall bestow the utmost attention, which, perhaps, will be my final farewell to that blighted spot (worse than the most bleak mountains of Scotland) yclept Parnassus; after this labour is finished, if Governor Johnstone cannot or does not help me to a little independence, *I will certainly bid adieu to Europe, to unhappy suspense, and perhaps also to the chagrin of soul which I feel to accompany it.*"

Such was the language which cannot now be read without exciting our sympathy for the author of the version of an epic, which, after a solemn devotion of no small portion of the most valuable years of life, had been presented to the world, with not sufficient remuneration or notice of the author, to create even hope in the sanguine temperament of a poet. Mickle was more honoured at Lisbon than in his own country. So imperceptible are the gradations of public favour to the feelings of genius, and so vast an interval separates that author, who does not immediately address the tastes or the fashions of his age, from the reward or the enjoyment of his studies.

We cannot account, among the lesser calamities of literature, that of a man of genius, who, dedicating his days to the composition of a voluminous and national work, when that labour is accomplished, finds, on its publication, the hope of fame, and perhaps other hopes as necessary to reward past toil, and open to future enterprise, all annihilated. Yet this work neglected, or not relished, perhaps even the sport of witlings, afterwards is placed among the treasures of our language, when the author is no more! but what is posthumous gratitude, could it reach even the ear of an angel?

The calamity is unavoidable; but this circumstance does not lessen it. New works must for a time be submitted to popular favour; but posterity is the inheritance of genius. The man of genius, however, who has composed this great work, calculates his vigils, is best acquainted with its merits, and is not without an anticipation of the future feeling of his country; he

"But weeps the more, because he weeps in vain."

Such is the fate which has awaited many great works; and the heart of genius has died away on its own labours. I need not go so far back as the Elizabethan age to illustrate a calamity which will excite the sympathy of every man of letters; but the great work of a man of no ordinary genius presents itself on this occasion.

This great work is "The Polyolbion" of MICHAEL DRAYTON; a poem unrivalled for its magnitude and its character. The genealogy of poetry is always suspicious; yet I think it owed its birth to Leland's magnificent view of his intended work on Britain, and was probably nourished by the "Britannia" of Camden, who inherited the mighty industry, without the poetical spirit, of Leland; Drayton embraced both. This singular combination of topographical erudition and poetical fancy, constitutes a national work—a union that some may conceive not fortunate, no more than "the slow length" of its Alexandrine metre, for the purposes of mere delight. Yet what theme can be more elevating than a bard chanting to his

"Father-land," as the Hollanders called their country? Our tales of ancient glory, our worthies who must not die, our towns, our rivers, and our mountains, all glancing before the picturesque eye of the naturalist and the poet! It is, indeed, a labour of Hercules; but it was not unaccompanied by the lyre of Apollo.

This national work was ill received; and the great author dejected, never pardoned his contemporaries, and even lost his temper. Drayton and his poetical friends beheld indignantly the trifles of the hour overpowering the neglected Polyolbion.

One poet tells us that

"——————— they prefer
The fawning lines of every pamphleter."
GEO. WITHERS.

And a contemporary records the utter neglect of this great poet:

"Why lives Drayton when the times refuse
Both means to live, and matter for a muse,
Only without excuse to leave us quite,
And tell us, durst we act, he durst to write."
W. BROWNE.

Drayton published his Polyolbion first in eighteen parts; and the second portion afterwards. In this interval we have a letter to Drummond, dated in 1619:—

"I thank you, my dear sweet Drummond, for your good opinion of Polyolbion. I have done twelve books more, that is, from the 18th book, which was Kent (if you note it), all the east parts and north to the river of Tweed; *but it lieth by me, for the booksellers and I are in terms*: they are a company of base knaves, whom I scorn and kick at."

The vengeance of the poet had been more justly wreaked on the buyers of books, than on the sellers, who, though knavery has a strong connection with trade, yet, were they knaves, they would be true to their own interests. Far from impeding a successful author, booksellers are apt to hurry his labours; for they prefer the crude to the mature fruit, whenever the public taste can be appeased even by an unripened dessert.

These "knaves," however, seem to have succeeded in forcing poor Drayton to observe an abstinence from the press, which must have convulsed all the feelings of authorship. The second part was not published till three years after this letter was written; and then without maps. Its preface is remarkable enough; it is pathetic, till Drayton loses the dignity of genius in its asperity. It is inscribed, in no good humour—

"TO ANY THAT WILL READ IT!

"When I first undertook this poem, or, as some have pleased to term it, this Herculean labour, I was by some virtuous friends persuaded that I should receive much comfort and encouragement; and for these reasons: First, it was a new clear way, never before gone by any; that it contained all the delicacies, delights, and rarities of this renowned isle, interwoven with the histories of the Britains, Saxons, Normans, and the later English. And further, that there is scarcely any of the nobility or gentry of this land, but that he is some way or other interested therein.

"But it hath fallen out otherwise; for instead of that comfort which my noble friends proposed as my due, I have met with barbarous ignorance and base detraction; such a cloud hath the devil drawn over the world's judgment. Some of the stationers that had the selling of the first part of this poem, because *it went not so fast away in the selling* as some of their beastly and abominable trash (a shame both to our language and our nation), have despightfully left out the epistles to the readers, and so have cousened the buyers with imperfected books, which those that have undertaken the second part have been forced to amend in the first, for *the small number that are yet remaining in their hands*.

"And some of our outlandish, unnatural English (I know not how otherwise to express them) stick not to say that there is nothing in this island worthy studying for, and take a great pride to be ignorant in anything thereof. As for these cattle, *odi profanum vulgus, et arceo*; of which I account them, be they never so great."

Yet, as a true poet, whose impulse, like fate, overturns all opposition, Drayton is not to be thrown out of his avocation; but intrepidly closes by promising "they shall not deter me from going on with Scotland, if means and time do not hinder me to perform as much as I have promised in my first song." Who could have imagined that such bitterness of style, and such angry emotions, could have been raised in the breast of a poet of pastoral elegance and fancy?

"Whose bounding muse o'er ev'ry mountain rode,
And every river warbled as it flow'd."
KIRKPATRICK.

It is melancholy to reflect, that some of the greatest works in our language have involved their authors in distress and anxiety; and that many have gone down to their grave insensible of that glory which soon covered it.

THE ILLUSIONS OF WRITERS IN VERSE.

WHO would, with the awful severity of Plato, banish poets from the republic? But it may be desirable that the republic should not be banished from poets, which it seems to be when an inordinate passion for writing verses drives them from every active pursuit. There is no greater enemy to domestic quiet than a confirmed versifier; yet are most of them much to be pitied: it is the *mediocre* critics they first meet with, who are the real origin of a populace of *mediocre* poets. A young writer of verses is sure to get flattered by those who affect to admire what they do not even understand, and by those who, because they understand, imagine they are likewise endowed with delicacy of taste and a critical judgment. What sacrifices of social enjoyments, and all the business of life, are lavished with a prodigal's ruin in an employment which will be usually discovered to be a source of early anxiety, and of late disappointment*! I say nothing of the ridicule in which it involves some wretched Mævius, but of the misery that falls so heavily on him, and is often entailed on his generation. Whitehead has versified an admirable reflection of Pope's, in the preface to his works:—

> "For wanting wit be totally undone,
> And barr'd all arts, for having fail'd in one?"

The great mind of BLACKSTONE never showed him more a poet than when he took, not without affection, "a farewell of the Muse," on his being called to the bar. DRUMMOND, of Hawthornden, quitted the bar from his love of poetry; yet he seems to have lamented slighting the profession which his father wished him to pursue. He perceives his error, he feels even contrition, but still cherishes it: no man, not in his senses, ever had a more lucid interval:—

> "I changed countries, new delights to find;
> But ah! for pleasure I did find new pain;
> Enchanting pleasure so did reason blind,
> That father's love and words I scorn'd as vain.
> I know that all the Muses' heavenly lays,
> With toil of spirit which are so dearly bought,
> As idle sounds of few or none are sought,
> That there is nothing lighter than vain praise;
> Know what I list, this all cannot me move,
> But that, alas! I both must write and love!"

Thus, like all poets, who, as Goldsmith observes, "are fond of enjoying the present, careless of the future," he talks like a man of sense, and acts like a fool.

This wonderful susceptibility of praise, to which poets seem more liable than any other class of authors, is indeed their common food; and they could not keep life in them without this nourishment. NAT. LEE, a true poet in all the excesses of poetical feelings—for he was in such raptures at times as to lose his senses—expresses himself in very energetic language on the effects of the praise necessary for poets:—

"Praise," says Lee, "is the greatest encouragement we chameleons can pretend to, or rather the manna that keeps soul and body together; we devour it as if it were angels' food, and vainly think we grow immortal. There is nothing transports a poet, next to love, like commending in the right place."

This, no doubt, is a rare enjoyment, and serves to strengthen his illusions. But the same fervid genius elsewhere confesses, when reproached for his ungoverned fancy, that it brings with itself its own punishment:—

"I cannot be," says this great and unfortunate poet, "so ridiculous a creature to any man as I am to myself; for who should know the house so well as the good man at home? who, when his neighbour comes to see him, still sets the best rooms to view; and, if he be not a wilful ass, keeps the rubbish and lumber in some dark hole, where nobody comes but himself, to mortify at melancholy hours."

Study the admirable preface of POPE, composed at that matured period of life when the fever of fame had passed away, and experience had corrected fancy. It is a calm statement between authors and readers; there is no imagination that colours by a single metaphor, or conceals the real feeling which moved the author on that solemn occasion, of collecting his works for the last time. It is on a full review of the past that this great poet delivers this remarkable sentence:—

"*I believe, if any one, early in his life, should contemplate the dangerous fate of* AUTHORS, *he would scarce be of their number on any consideration.* The life of a wit is a warfare upon earth; and to pretend to serve the learned world in any way, one must have the constancy of a martyr, and a resolution to suffer for its sake."

* An elegant poet of our times alludes, with due feeling, to these personal sacrifices. Addressing Poetry, he exclaims—

> "In devotion to thy heavenly charms,
> I clasp'd thy altar with my infant arms;
> For thee neglected the wide field of wealth,
> The toils of interest, and the sports of health."

How often may we lament that poets are too apt "to clasp the altar with infant arms." Goldsmith was near forty when he published his popular poems—and the greater number of the most valued poems were produced in mature life. When the poet begins in "infancy," he too often contracts a habit of writing verses, and sometimes, in all his life, never reaches poetry.

All this is so true in literary history, that he who affects to suspect the sincerity of Pope's declaration, may flatter his sagacity, but will do no credit to his knowledge.

If thus great poets pour their lamentations for having devoted themselves to their art, some sympathy is due to the querulousness of a numerous race of *provincial bards*, whose situation is ever at variance with their feelings. These usually form exaggerated conceptions of their own genius, from the habit of comparing themselves with their contracted circle. Restless, with a desire of poetical celebrity, their heated imagination views in the metropolis that fame and fortune denied them in their native town; there they become half-hermits and half-philosophers, darting epigrams which provoke hatred, or pouring elegies, descriptive of their feelings, which move derision: their neighbours find it much easier to ascertain their foibles, than comprehend their genius; and both parties live in a state of mutual persecution. Such, among many, was the fate of the poet HERRICK; his vein was pastoral, and he lived in the elysium of the west, which, however, he describes by the sullen epithet, "Dull Devonshire," where "he is still sad." Strange that such a poet should have resided near twenty years in one of our most beautiful counties in a very discontented humour. When he quitted his village of "Deanbourne," the petulant poet left behind him a severe "farewell," which was found still preserved in the parish, after a lapse of more than a century. Local satire has been often preserved by the very objects it is directed against, sometimes from the charm of the wit itself, and sometimes from the covert malice of attacking our neighbours. Thus he addresses "Deanbourne, a rude river in Devonshire, by which, sometime, he lived:—"

> "Dean-bourn, farewell!
> Thy rockie bottom that doth tear thy streams,
> And makes them frantic, e'en to all extremes.
> Rockie thou art, and rockie we discover
> Thy men,—
> O men! O manners!—
> O people currish, churlish as their seas—"

He rejoices he leaves them, never to return till "rocks shall turn to rivers." When he arrives in London,

> "From the dull confines of the drooping west,
> To see the day-spring from the pregnant east,"

he, "ravished in spirit," exclaims, on a view of the metropolis,

> "O place! O people! manners form'd to please
> All nations, customs, kindreds, languages!"

But he fervently entreats not to be banished again:

> "For, rather than I'll to the west return,
> I'll beg of thee first, here to have mine urn."

The Devonians were avenged; for the satirist of the *English Arcadia* was condemned again to reside by "its rockie side," among "its rockie men."

Such has been the usual chaunt of provincial poets; and, if the "silky-soft Favonian gales" of Devon, with its "Worthies," could not escape the anger of such a poet as Herrick, what county may hope to be saved from the invective of querulous and dissatisfied poets?

In this calamity of authors I will show that a great poet felicitated himself that poetry was not the business of his life; and afterwards I will bring forward an evidence that the immoderate pursuit of poetry, with a very moderate genius, creates a perpetual state of illusion; and pursues gray-headed folly even to the verge of the grave.

Pope imagined that PRIOR was only fit to make verses, and less qualified for business than Addison himself. Had Prior lived to finish that history of his own times he was writing, we should have seen how far the opinion of Pope was right. Prior abandoned the Whigs, who had been his first patrons, for the Tories, who were now willing to adopt the political apostate. This versatility for place and pension rather shows that Prior was a little more "qualified for business than Addison."

Johnson tells us "Prior lived at a time when the rage of party detected all which was any man's interest to hide; and, as little ill is heard of Prior, it is certain that not much was known:" more, however, than Johnson supposes. This great man came to the pleasing task of his poetical biography totally unprepared, except with the maturity of his genius, as a profound observer of man, and an invincible dogmatist in taste. In the history of the times, Johnson is deficient, which has deprived us of that permanent instruction and delight his intellectual powers had poured around it. The character and the secret history of Prior are laid open in the "State Poems*;" a bitter Whiggish narrative, too particular to be entirely fictitious, while it throws a new light on Johnson's observation of Prior's "propensity to sordid converse, and the low delights of mean company," which Johnson had imperfectly learned from some attendant on Prior.

> "A vintner's boy, the wretch was first preferr'd
> To wait at Vice's gates, and pimp for bread;
> To hold the candle, and sometimes the door,
> Let in the drunkard, and let out ——.

* Vol. ii. p. 355.

But, as to villains it has often chanc'd,
Was for his wit and wickedness advanc'd.
Let no man think his new behaviour strange,
No metamorphosis can nature change;
Effects are chain'd to causes; generally,
The rascal born will like a rascal die.
"His Prince's favours follow'd him in vain;
They chang'd the circumstance, but not the man.
While out of pocket, and his spirits low,
He'd beg, write panegyrics, cringe, and bow;
But when good pensions had his labours crown'd,
His panegyrics into satires turn'd;
O what assiduous pains does Prior take
To let great Dorset see he could mistake!
Dissembling nature false description gave,
Show'd him the poet, but conceal'd the knave."

To us the poet Prior is better known than the placeman Prior; yet in his own day the reverse often occurred. Prior was a State-Proteus; Sunderland, the most ambiguous of politicians, was the *Erle Robert* to whom he addressed his *Mice;* and Prior was now Secretary to the Embassy at Ryswick and Paris; independent even of the English ambassador—now a Lord of Trade, and, at length, a Minister Plenipotentiary to Louis XIV.

Our business is with his poetical feelings.

Prior declares he was chiefly "a poet by accident;" and hints, in collecting his works, that "some of them, as they came singly from the first impression, have lain long and quietly in Mr. Tonson's shop." When his party had their downfall, and he was confined two years in prison, he composed his "Alma," to while away prison hours; and when, at length, he obtained his freedom, he had nothing remaining but that fellowship which, in his exaltation, he had been censured for retaining, but which he then said he might have to live upon at last. Prior had great sagacity, and too right a notion of human affairs in politics, to expect his party would last his time, or in poetry, that he could ever derive a revenue from rhymes!

I will now show that that rare personage, a sensible poet, in reviewing his life in that hour of solitude when no passion is retained but truth, while we are casting up the amount of our past days scrupulously to ourselves, felicitated himself that the natural bent of his mind, which inclined to poetry, had been checked, and not indulged, throughout his whole life. Prior congratulated himself that he had been only "a poet by accident," not by occupation.

In a manuscript by Prior, consisting of "An Essay on Learning," I find this curious and interesting passage entirely relating to the poet himself:

"I remember nothing farther in life than that I made verses; I chose Guy Earl of Warwick for my first hero, and killed Colborne the giant before I was big enough for Westminster School. But I had two accidents in youth which hindered me from being quite possessed with the Muse. I was bred in a college where prose was more in fashion than verse,—and, as soon as I had taken my first degree, I was sent the King's Secretary to the Hague; there I had enough to do in studying French and Dutch, and altering my Terentian and Virgilian style into that of Articles and Conventions; so that *poetry, which by the bent of my mind might have become the business of my life, was, by the happiness of my education, only the amusement of it;* and in this too having the prospect of some little fortune to be made, and friendships to be cultivated with the great men, I did not launch much into *Satire*, which, however agreeable for the present to the writers and encouragers of it, does in time do neither of them good; considering the uncertainty of fortune, and the various changes of Ministry, and that every man, as he resents, may punish in his turn of greatness and power."

Such is the wholesome counsel of the Solomon of Bards to an aspirant, who in his ardour for poetical honours, becomes careless of their consequences, if he can but possess them.

I have now to bring forward one of those unhappy men of rhyme, who, after many painful struggles, and a long querulous life, have died amid the ravings of their immortality—one of those miserable bards of mediocrity, whom no beadle-critic could ever whip out of the poetical parish.

There is a case in Mr. Haslam's "Observations on Insanity," who assures us that the patient he describes was insane, which will appear strange to those who have watched more poets than lunatics!

"This patient, when admitted, was very noisy, and importunately talkative — reciting passages from the Greek and Roman poets, or talking of his own literary importance. He became so troublesome to the other madmen, who were sufficiently occupied with their own speculations, that they avoided and excluded him from the common room; so that he was at last reduced to the mortifying situation of being the sole auditor of his own compositions. He conceived himself very nearly related to Anacreon, and possessed of the peculiar vein of that poet."

Such is the very accurate case drawn up by a medical writer. I can conceive nothing in it to warrant the charge of insanity; Mr. Haslam, not being a poet, seems to have mistaken the common orgasm of poetry for insanity itself.

Of such poets, one was the late PERCIVAL STOCKDALE, who, with the most entertaining simplicity, has, in "The Memoirs of his Life and Writings," presented us with a full-length figure of this class

of poets; those whom the perpetual pursuits of poetry, however indifferent, involve in a perpetual illusion; they are only discovered in their profound obscurity by the piteous cries they sometimes utter; they live on querulously, which is an evil for themselves, and to no purpose of life, which is an evil to others.

I remember in my youth, Percival Stockdale, as a condemned poet of the times; of whom the bookseller Flexney complained, that whenever this poet came to town, it cost him twenty pounds. Flexney had been the publisher of Churchill's works; and, never forgetting the time when he published "The Rosciad," which at first did not sell, and afterwards became the most popular poem, he was speculating all his life for another Churchill, and another quarto poem. Stockdale usually brought him what he wanted—and Flexney found the workman, but never the work.

Many a year had passed in silence, and Stockdale could hardly be considered alive, when, to the amazement of some curious observers of our literature, a venerable man, about his eightieth year, a vivacious spectre, with a cheerful voice, seemed as if throwing aside his shroud in gaiety —to come to assure us of the immortality of one of the worst poets of the time.

To have taken this portrait from the life would have been difficult; but the artist has painted himself, and manufactured his own colours; else had our ordinary ones but faintly copied this Chinese grotesque picture—the glare and the glow must be borrowed from his own pallet.

Our self-biographer announces his "Life" with prospective rapture, at the moment he is turning a sad retrospect on his "Writings;" for this was the chequered countenance of his character, a smile while he was writing, a tear when he had published! "I know," he exclaims, "that this book will live and escape *the havoc that has been made of my literary fame.*" Again—"Before I die, I *think my literary fame may be fixed on an adamantine foundation.*" Our old acquaintance, Blas of Santillane, at setting out on his travels, conceived himself to be *la huitième merveille du monde;* but here is one, who, after the experience of a long life, is writing a large work to prove himself that very curious thing.

What were these mighty and unknown works? Stockdale confesses that all his verses have been received with negligence or contempt; yet their mediocrity, the absolute poverty of his genius, never once occurred to the poetical patriarch.

I have said that the frequent origin of bad poets is owing to bad critics; and it was the early friends of Stockdale, who, mistaking his animal spirits for genius, by directing them into the walks of poetry, bewildered him for ever. It was their hand that heedlessly fixed the bias in the rolling bowl of his restless mind.

He tells us that while yet a boy of twelve years old, one day talking with his father at Branxton, where the battle of Flodden was fought, the old gentleman said to him with great emphasis—

"You may make that place remarkable for your birth, if you take care of yourself. My father's understanding was clear and strong, and he could penetrate human nature. He already saw that *I had natural advantages above those of common men.*"

But it seems that, at some earlier period even than his twelfth year, some good-natured Pythian had predicted that Stockdale would be "a poet." This ambiguous oracle was still listened to, after a lapse of more than half a century, and the decree is still repeated with fond credulity:—"Notwithstanding," he exclaims, "*all that is past*, O thou god of my mind! [meaning the aforesaid Pythian] I still hope that my future fame will decidedly *warrant the prediction!*"

Stockdale had, in truth, an excessive sensibility of temper, without any control over it—he had all the nervous contortions of the Sybil, without her inspiration; and shifting, in his many-shaped life, through all characters and all pursuits, "exalting the olive of Minerva with the grape of Bacchus," as he phrases it, he was a lover, a tutor, a recruiting officer, a reviewer, and, at length, a clergyman; but a poet eternally! His mind was so curved, that nothing could stand steadily upon it. The accidents of such a life he describes with such a face of rueful simplicity, and mixes up so much grave drollery and merry pathos with all he says or does, and his ubiquity is so wonderful, that he gives an idea of a character, of whose existence we had previously no conception, that of a Sentimental Harlequin*.

In the early part of his life, Stockdale undertook many poetical pilgrimages; he visited the house where Thomson was born; the coffee-room where Dryden presided among the wits, &c. Recollecting the influence of these local associations, he breaks forth, "Neither the unrelenting coldness, nor the repeated insolence of mankind, can prevent me from thinking that *something like this enthusiastic devotion may hereafter be paid to* ME."

Perhaps, till this appeared, it might not be

* My old favourite Cynic, with all his rough honesty and acute discrimination, Anthony Wood, engraved a sketch of Stockdale when he etched with his aqua-fortis the personage of a brother:—"This Edward Waterhouse wrote a rhapsodical, indigested, whimsical work; and not in the least to be taken into the hand of any sober scholar, unless it be to make him laugh or wonder at the simplicity of some people. He was a cockbrained man, and afterwards took orders."

suspected that any unlucky writer of verse could ever feel such a magical conviction of his poetical stability. Stockdale, to assist this pilgrimage to his various shrines, has particularised all the spots where his works were composed! Posterity has many shrines to visit, and will be glad to know (for perhaps it may excite a smile) that "The Philosopher, a poem, was written in Warwick Court, Holborn, in 1769,"—"The Life of Waller, in Round Court in the Strand."—A good deal he wrote in "May's Buildings, St. Martin's Lane," &c. but

"In my lodgings at Portsmouth, in St. Mary's Street, I wrote my Elegy on the Death of a Lady's Linnet. It will not be uninteresting to sensibility, to thinking and elegant minds. It deeply interested me, and therefore produced not one of my weakest and worst written poems. It was directly opposite to a noted house, which was distinguished by the name of *the green rails*; where the riotous orgies of Naxos and Cythera contrasted with my quiet and purer occupations."

I would not, however, take his own estimate of his own poems; because, after praising them outrageously, he seems at times to doubt if they are as exquisite as he thinks them! He has composed no one, in which some poetical excellence does not appear—and yet in each nice decision he holds with difficulty the trepidations of the scales of criticism—for he tells us of "An Address to the Supreme Being," that "it is distinguished throughout with a natural and fervid piety; it is flowing and poetical; it is not without its pathos." And yet, notwithstanding all this condiment, the confection is evidently good for nothing; for he discovers that "this flowing, fervid, and poetical address" is "not animated with that vigour which gives dignity and impression to poetry." One feels for such unhappy and infected authors—they would think of themselves as they wish, at the moment that truth and experience come in upon them, and rack them with the most painful feelings.

Stockdale once wrote a declamatory life of Waller.—When Johnson's appeared, though in his biography, says Stockdale, "he paid a large tribute to the abilities of Goldsmith and Hawkesworth, yet *he made no mention of my name.*" It is evident that Johnson, who knew him well, did not care to remember it. When Johnson was busied on the life of Pope, Stockdale wrote a pathetic letter to him, *earnestly imploring* "a generous tribute from his authority." Johnson was still obdurately silent; and Stockdale, who had received many acts of humane kindness from him, adds with fretful *naïveté*,

"In his sentiments towards me he was divided between a benevolence to my interests, and a *coldness to my fame.*"

Thus, in a moment, in the perverted heart of the scribbler, will ever be cancelled all human obligation for acts of benevolence, if we are *cold to his fame!*

And yet let us not too hastily condemn these unhappy men, even for the violation of the lesser moral feelings—it is often but a fatal effect from a melancholy cause; that hallucination of the intellect, in which, if their genius, as they call it, sometimes appears to sparkle like a painted bubble in the buoyancy of their vanity, they are also condemned to see it sinking in the dark horrors of a disappointed author, who has risked his life and his happiness on the miserable productions of his pen. The agonies of a disappointed author cannot, indeed, be contemplated without pain. If they can instruct, the following quotation will have its use.

Among the innumerable productions of Stockdale, was a History of Gibraltar; which might have been interesting, from his having resided there: in a moment of despair, like Medea, he immolated his unfortunate offspring.

"When I had arrived at within a day's work of its conclusion, in consequence of some immediate and mortifying accidents, *my literary adversity*, and all my other misfortunes, took *fast hold of my mind; oppressed it extremely; and reduced it to a stage of the deepest dejection and despondency.* In this unhappy view of life, I made a sudden resolution—*never more to prosecute the profession of an author;* to retire altogether from the world, and read only for consolation and amusement. *I committed to the flames my History of Gibraltar, and my translation of Marsollier's Life of Cardinal Ximenes;* for which the bookseller had refused to pay me the fifty guineas according to agreement."

This claims a tear! Never were the agonies of literary disappointment more pathetically told.

But as it is impossible to have known poor deluded Stockdale, and not to have laughed at him more than to have wept for him—so the catastrophe of this author's literary life is as finely in character as all the acts. That catastrophe, of course, is his last poem.

After many years his poetical demon having been chained from the world, suddenly broke forth on the reports of a French invasion. The narrative shall proceed in his own inimitable manner.

"My poetical spirit excited me to write my poem of 'The Invincible Island.' I never found myself in a happier disposition to compose, nor ever wrote with more pleasure. I presumed warmly to hope, that unless *inveterate prejudice and malice* were as invincible as our island itself, it would have *the diffusive circulation* which I earnestly desired.

"Flushed with this idea—borne impetuously along by *ambition and by hope, though they had often deluded me,* I set off in the mail-coach from Durham, for London, on the 9th of December,

1797, at midnight, and in a severe storm. On my arrival in town, my poem was advertised, printed, and published with great expedition. It was printed for Clarke in New Bond-street. For several days the sale was very promising; and my bookseller as well as myself entertained sanguine hopes; *but the demand for the poem relaxed gradually!* From this last of many literary misfortunes, I inferred that *prejudice* and *malignity*, in my fate as an *author*, seemed, indeed, to be invincible."

The catastrophe of the poet is much better told than anything in the poem, which had not merit enough to support that interest which the temporary subject had excited.

Let the fate of Stockdale instruct some, and he will not have written in vain the "Memoirs of his Life and Writings." I have only turned the literary feature to our eye; it was combined with others, equally striking, from the same mould in which that was cast. Stockdale imagined he possessed an intuitive knowledge of human nature. He says, "everything that constituted my nature, my acquirements, my habits, and my fortune, conspired to let in upon me a complete knowledge of human nature." A most striking proof of this knowledge is his parallel, after the manner of Plutarch, between Charles XII. and Himself! He frankly confesses there were some points in which he and the Swedish monarch did not exactly resemble each other. He thinks, for instance, that the King of Sweden had a somewhat more fervid and original genius than himself, and was likewise a little more robust in his person—but, subjoins Stockdale,

"Of our reciprocal fortune, achievements and conduct, some parts will be to *his* advantage, and some to *mine*."

Yet in regard to *Fame*, the main object between him and Charles XII., Stockdale imagined that his own

"Will not probably take its fixed and immovable station, and shine with its expanded and permanent splendour, till it consecrates his ashes, till it illumines his tomb!"

Pope hesitated at deciding on the durability of his poetry. Prior congratulates himself that he had not devoted all his days to rhymes. Stockdale imagines his fame is to commence at the very point (the tomb) where genius trembles its own may nearly terminate!

To close this article, I could wish to regale the poetical Stockdales with a delectable morsel of fraternal biography; such would be the life and its memorable close of Elkanah Settle, who imagined himself to be a great poet, when he was placed on a level with Dryden by the town-wits, gentle spirits! to vex genius.

Settle's play of "The Empress of Morocco" was the very first "adorned with sculptures." However, in due time, the Whigs despising his rhymes, Settle tried his prose for the Tories; but he was a magician whose enchantments never charmed. He at length obtained the office of the city poet, when lord mayors were proud enough to have laureates in their annual pageants.

When Elkanah Settle published any *party-poem*, he sent copies round to the chiefs of the party, accompanied with addresses, to extort pecuniary presents. He had latterly one standard *Elegy* and *Epithalamium* printed off with blanks, which by the ingenious contrivance of filling up with the names of any considerable person, who died or was married, no one who was going out of life or entering it, *could pass scot-free* from the *tax levied by his hacknied muse*. The following letter accompanied his presentation copy to the Duke of Somerset, on a poem, in Latin and English, on the Hanover succession, when Elkanah wrote for the Whigs, as he had for the Tories:—

"Sir,

"Nothing but the greatness of the subject could encourage my presumption in laying the enclosed Essay at your Grace's feet, being with all profound humility, your Grace's most dutiful servant,

"E. Settle."

In the latter part of his life Settle dropped still lower, and became the poet of a booth at Bartholomew-fair, and composed drolls, for which the rival of Dryden, it seems, had a genius!—but it was little respected—for two great personages, "Mrs. Minns, and her daughter Mrs. Leigh," approving of their great Poet's happy invention in one of his own drolls, "St. George for England," of a green dragon, as large as life, insisted, as the tyrant of old did to the inventor of the brazen bull, that the first experiment should be made on the artist himself, and Settle was tried in his own dragon; he crept in with all his genius, and did "act the dragon, enclosed in a case of green leather of his own invention." The circumstance is recorded in the lively verse of Young, in his "Epistle to Pope concerning the authors of the age."

"Poor Elkanah, all other changes past,
For bread in Smithfield dragons hiss'd at last,
Spit streams of fire to make the butchers gape,
And found his manners suited to his shape;
Such is the fate of talents misapplied;
So lived your prototype, and so he died."

INDEX.

A.

PAGE

AKENSIDE exhibited as a ludicrous personage by Smollett; his real character cast in the moulds of Antiquity *n.* 97
Auburst, a political author, his history . . 53
Arnall a great political scribe 52
Ascham, Roger, the founder of English Prose . 56
Athenæ Britannicæ, one of the rarest works, account of 61
Athenæ Oxonienses, an apology for 89
Authors, Horace Walpole affects to despise them . 66
——— their maladies 78
——— case of, stated 84
——— incompetent remuneration of 87
——— who wrote above the genius of their own age 84
——— ill reception from the public of their valuable works 85
——— who have sacrificed their fortunes to their studies . . . . . *ib.*
——— who commenced their literary life with ardour, and found their genius obstructed by numerous causes 86
——— who have never published their works . 87
——— provincial, liable to bad passions . . 104
——— by profession, a phrase of modern origin . 51
——————— original letter to a Minister from one . . . . . *ib.*
——————— Fielding's apology for them 53

B.

Baker, Rev. *Thomas*, his collection 88
Barnes, Joshua, wrote a poem to prove Solomon was the author of the Iliad, and why . . 90
——— his pathetic letter descriptive of his literary calamities . . . . . *ib.*
——— hints at the vast number of his unpublished works . . . . . *ib.*
Bayne, Alexander, died of intense application . 79
Biographia Britannica in danger of being left unfinished 85
Booksellers in the reign of Elizabeth . . 58
——— why their interest is rarely combined with the advancement of literature *n.* . . . 86
——— why they prefer the crude to the matured fruit 140

C.

Carey, Henry, author of several of our national poems, of the words and the air of "God save the King," and of Chrononhotonthologos, &c., his miserable end 92
——— *Henry*, inventor of "Namby Pamby" . *ib.*
Carey's Wish, a patriotic song on the Freedom of Election, by the author of "God save the King" *n.* *ib.*

PAGE

Carey's "Sally in our Alley," a popular ballad, its curious origin 92
Carte, Thomas, his valuable history 95
——— its fate from his indiscretion . 96
Castell, Dr. ruined in health and fortune by the publication of his Polyglott *n.* 130
Chatterton, his balance-sheet on the Lord Mayor's death *n.* 59
Churchyard, Thomas, an unhappy poet, describes his patrons . . . . . *ib.*
——————— his pathetic description of his wretched old age . . . . . *ib.*
Cole, Rev. *William*, his character 87
——————— his melancholy confession on his lengthened literary labours 88
——————— his misery how to dispose of his collections, ... *ib.*
Collins, the poet, quits the university suddenly with romantic hopes of becoming an author . . 126
——— publishes his "Odes" without success, and afterwards indignantly burns the edition . . *ib.*
——— defended from some reproaches of irresolution, made by Johnson 127
——— anecdote of his life in the Metropolis . *ib.*
——— anecdotes of, when under the influence of a disordered intellect 128
——— his monument described . . . . . *ib.*
——— two Sonnets descriptive of Collins . . 129
——— his poetical character defended . . . *ib.*
Contemporaries, how they seek to level genius . 138
Colgrave, Randle, falls blind in the labour of his Dictionary 79
Cowel, incurs by his curious work "The Interpreter" the censure of the King and the Commons on opposite principles 132
Cowley, original letter from *n.* 63
——— his essays form a part of his confessions . 64
——— describes his feelings at Court . . . *ib.*
——— his melancholy attributed to his Ode to Brutus, by which he incurred the disgrace of the Court 65
——— his remarkable lamentation for having written poetry 66
——— his Epitaph composed by himself . . *ib.*
Critic, poetical, without any taste, how he contrived to criticise poems 109
Criticism, illiberal, some of its consequences stated 108

D.

Davies, Myles, a mendicant author, his life . 61
Dedication, composed by a patron to himself *n.* . 61
Dedications, practised in an extraordinary way *n.* 61
De Loime's work on the constitution could find no patronage, and the author's bitter complaints . 136
——————— relieved by the Literary Fund *n.* . . *ib.*
Dennis, John, distinguished as "The Critic" . 70

PAGE

Dennis, John, his "Original Letters," and "Remarks on Prince Arthur," his best productions . . 71
———— anecdotes of his brutal vehemence . 72
———— curious caricature of his personal manners 71
———— a specimen of his anti-poetical notions *n*. 72
———— his frenzy on the Italian Opera . 73
———— acknowledges that he is considered as ill-natured, and complains of public neglect . *ib*.
———— more really the victim of his criticisms than the genius he insulted . . . . . *ib*.
Drake, Dr. *John*, a political writer, his miserable life 53
Drayton's national work, "The Polyolbion," ill received, and the author greatly dejected . . 140
———— angry preface addressed "To any that will read it" . . . . . *ib*.
Dryden, in his old age, complains of dying of over-study 137
———— his dramatic life a series of vexations and hostility . . . . . *ib*.
———— regrets he was born among Englishmen 138
———— remarkable confession of the poet . *ib*.

E.

Exercise, to be substituted for medicine by literary men, and which is the best *n*. 79

F.

Farneworth's Translation of Machiavel . . 85

G.

Goldsmith's remonstrance on illiberal criticism from which the law gives no protection . . . 109
Granger's complaint of not receiving half the pay of a scavenger, ... 85
Grey, Dr. *Zachary*, the father of our commentators, ridiculed and abused 93
———— the probable origin of his new mode of illustrating Hudibras . . . . *ib*.
Greene, Robert, a town-wit, awful satirical address to, *n*. 100
Guthrie offers his services as a hackney-writer to a minister 51

H.

Harvey, Gabriel, his character 99
———— his device against his antagonist *n*. *ib*.
———— his portrait 100
———— severely satirised by Nash for his prolix periods—cannot be endured to be considered as the son of a rope-maker—his pretended sordid manners—his affectation of Italian fashions—his friends ridiculed—his pedantic taste for hexameter verses, &c. 101
———— his curious remonstrance with Nash 102
———— his lamentations on invectives . 104
———— his books, and Nash's, suppressed by order of the Archbishop of Canterbury for their mutual virulence 100
Hawkesworth, Dr., letter on presenting his MS. of Cook's Voyages for examination, the publication of which overwhelmed his fortitude and intellect 135
Henley, Orator, this buffoon an indefatigable student, an elegant poet, and wit 74
———— his poem of "Esther, Queen of Persia" *ib*.
———— sudden change in his character . 75
———— seems to have attempted to pull down the Church and the University . . . . *ib*.

PAGE

Henley, Orator, some idea of his lectures *n*. . . 76
———— his projects to supply a Universal School . . . . . *ib*.
———— specimens of his buffoonery on solemn occasions 77
———— his "Defence of the Oratory" *n*. . *ib*.
———— once found his match in two disputants . . . . . *ib*.
———— specimen of the diary of his "Oratory Transactions" 78
———— his character . . . . . *ib*.
Henry, Dr., the Historian, the sale of his work, on which he had expended much of his fortune and his life, stopped, and himself ridiculed, by a conspiracy raised against him 106
———— caustic review of his history *n*. . . 107
Heron, Robert, draws up the distresses of a man of letters living by literary industry in the confinement of a sponging-house, from his original letter 83
Herrick, Robert, petulant invective against Devonshire 142
Howel, nearly lost his life by excessive study . 80
Hume, his literary life how mortified with disappointments 136
———— wished to change his name and his country . *ib*.
———— his letter to Des Maiseaux requesting his opinion of his philosophy . . . . . *ib*.

I and J.

Icon Libellorum. See *Athenæ Britannicæ*.

K.

Kennet's, Bishop, Register and Chronicle . . 86
Kenrick, Dr., a caustic critic, treats our great authors with the most amusing arrogance . . . 109
———— an epigram on himself, by himself *n*. . *ib*.

L.

Leland, the antiquary, an accomplished scholar . 123
———— his "Strena," or New Year's Gift to Henry VIII., an account of his studies, and his magnificent projects . . . . . *ib*.
———— doubts that his labours will reach posterity . 124
———— he values "the furniture" of his mind . *ib*.
———— his bust striking from its physiognomy . 125
———— the ruins of his mind discovered in his library *ib*.
———— the inscription on his tomb probably had been composed by himself, before his insanity . *ib*.
Lightfoot, could not procure the printing of his work 132
Literary Property, difficulties to ascertain its nature 55
———— history of . . . . . *ib*.
———— value of *n*. . . . . *ib*.
Lloyd's, Bishop, collections and their fate . . 88
Logan, the history of his literary disappointments; dies broken-hearted 82
———— his idea of a great author 83

M.

M'Donald, or *Matthew Bramble*, his tragical reply to an inquiry after his tragedy 82
Macdiarmid, John, died of over-study and exhaustion 80
Martin Mar-Prelate's libels issuing from a movable press carried about the country 98
Melancholy persons frequently the most delightful companions *n*. 127
Mickle's pathetic address to his muse . . 139
———— his disappointments after the publication of the Lusiad induce him to wish to abandon his native country . . . . . *ib*.

PAGE

Milton's works the favourite prey of booksellers . 55
Mortimer, Thomas, his complaint in old age of the preference given to young adventurers . . 81

N.

Nash, Tom, the misery of his literary life . . 58
——— threatens his patrons 59
——— his character as a Lucianic satirist . 100
——— silences Mar-Prelate with his own weapons 98
——— his "Have with you to Saffron Walden," a singular literary invective against Gabriel Harvey 100
Newton, of a fearful temper in criticism *n*. . . 106

O.

Ockley, Simon, among the first of our authors who exhibited in the East a great nation in his "History of the Saracens" 129
——— his sufferings expressed in a remarkable preface dated from jail . . . *ib.*
——— dines with the Earl of Oxford, with an original letter of apology for his uncourtly behaviour 131
——— exults in prison for the leisure it affords for study *n*. 132
——— neglected, but employed by ministers . . . . . *ib.*
Oldmixon asserts Lord Clarendon's History to have been interpolated, while himself falsifies Daniel's Chronicle *n*. 52

P.

Pattison, a young poet, his despair in an address to Heaven, and a pathetic letter 91
Poets, mediocre Critics are the real origin of *mediocre* 141
——— Nat. Lee describes their wonderful susceptibility of praise . . . . . *ib.*
——— provincial, their situation at variance with their feelings 142
Prior, curious character of, from a Whig satire . *ib.*
——— felicitated himself that his natural inclination for poetry had been checked . . . 143
Proclamation issued by James I. against Cowel's book, "The Interpreter," a curious document in literary history 133
Prideaux' "Connexion of Old and New Testament" 85
Prince's "Worthies of Devon" 85
Prynne, a voluminous author without judgment, but the character of the man not so ridiculous as the author 112
——— his intrepid character . . . . . *ib.*
——— his curious argument against being debarred from pen and ink *n*. . . . . *ib.*
——— his interview with Laud in the Tower *n*. . 113
——— had a good deal of cunning in his character *n*. . . . . *ib.*
——— grieved for the Revolution in which he himself had been so conspicuous a leader . . *ib.*
——— his speeches as voluminous as his writings *n*. . . . . *ib.*
——— seldom dined *n*. 114
——— account of his famous "Histriomastix" . *ib.*
——— Milton admirably characterises Prynne's absurd learning *n*. . . . . *ib.*
——— how the "Histriomastix" was at once an elaborate work of many years, and yet a temporary satire—the secret history of the book being as extraordinary as the book itself . , . . *ib.*

R.

PAGE

Ridicule described; it creates a fictitious personage . 97
Ritson, Joseph, the late poetical antiquary, carried criticism to insanity 70
Ritson, Isaac, a young Scotch writer, perishes by attempting to exist by the efforts of his pen . 81
——— his extemporary rhapsody descriptive of his melancholy fate . . . . . *ib.*
Rushworth dies of a broken heart, having neglected his own affairs for his "Historical Collections" . 85
Rymer's distress in forming his "Historical Collections" 85
Ryves, Eliza, her extraordinary literary exertions and melancholy end 95

S.

Sale, the learned, often wanted a meal while translating the Koran *n*. 130
Scot, Reginald, persecuted for his work against Witchcraft 134
Scott of Amwell, the Quaker and poet, offended at being compared to Capt. Macheath by the affected witticism of a Reviewer 110
——— his extraordinary "Letter to the Critical Reviewers," in which he enumerates his own poetical beauties . . . . . *ib.*
Selden compelled to recant his opinions, and not suffered to reply to his calumniators . . . 134
——— refuses James I. to publish his defence of the Sovereignty of the Seas, till Grotius provoked his reply 135
Settle, Elkanah, the ludicrous close of a scribbler's life 146
Shuckford, "Sacred and Profane History Connected" 85
Smollett confesses the incredible labour and chagrin he had endured as an author 54
Steele, his paradoxical character 121
——— why he wrote a laughable comedy after his "Christian Hero" 122
——— his ill choice in a wife of an uncongenial character . . . . . *ib.*
——— specimens of his "Love despatches" *n*. . *ib.*
——— finely contrasts his own character with that of Addison's *n*. 123
Stillingfleet, Bishop, his end supposed to have been hastened by Locke's confutation of his metaphysical notions *n*. 108
Stockdale, Perceval, his character; an extraordinary instance of the illusions of writers in verse . . 144
——— draws a parallel between Charles XII. and himself 145
Stowe, the Chronicler, petitions to be a licensed beggar 61
——— ridiculed and persecuted . *ib.*
Strutt, the late antiquary, a man of genius and imagination 85
——— his spirited letters on commencing his career of authorship 86
Stuart, Dr. *Gilbert*, his envious character; desirous of destroying the literary works of his countrymen 104
——— projects the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, its design 105
——— his horrid feelings excited by his disappointments 106
——— raises a literary conspiracy against Dr. Henry . . . . . *ib.*
——— dies miserably 108
Subscriptions once inundated our literature with worthless works 61

T.

PAGE

Toland, a lover of study 116
—— defends himself from the aspersion of atheism or deism . . . . . *ib.*
—— accused of an intention to found a sect . 117
—— had the art of explaining away his own words . . . . . *ib.*
Toland, a great artificer of title-pages . . . 117
—— his "Pantheisticon" 118
—— projects a new office of a private monitor to the minister 119
—— of the books he read and his MSS. *n.* . . . 120
—— his panegyrical epitaph composed by himself *ib.*
—— Locke's admirable foresight of his character 121
Tonson's bickerings with Dryden *n.* 55

W.

Walpole, Horace, his literary character . . . 66
Walpole, Horace, instances of his pointed vivacity against authors *n.* 66
—— why he attacked the fame of Sydney, and defended Richard III. 68
—— his literary mortifications, acknowledged by himself from his original letters . . *ib.*
—— how Gray treated him when invited to Strawberry-hill *n.* . . . . . *ib.*
—— extraordinary letter of, expressing his contempt of his most celebrated contemporaries 69
Wharton, Henry, sunk under his historical studies 80
Works, valuable, not completed from deficient encouragement 85
Wood, Anthony, his character 89
—— an apology for the "Athenæ Oxonienses" . . . . . *ib.*
—— the writers of a party whom he abhorred frequently refer to him in their own favour . . . . . *ib.*

END OF THE CALAMITIES OF AUTHORS.

QUARRELS OF AUTHORS;

OR,

SOME MEMOIRS FOR OUR LITERARY HISTORY.

"The use and end of this Work I do not so much design for curiosity, or satisfaction of those that are the lovers of learning, but chiefly for a more grave and serious purpose; which is, that it will make *learned men wise in the use and administration of learning.*"—LORD BACON, *of Learning.*

PREFACE.

THE QUARRELS OF AUTHORS may be considered as a continuation of the CALAMITIES OF AUTHORS; and both, as some Memoirs for Literary History.

These Quarrels of Authors are not designed to wound the Literary Character, but to expose the secret arts of calumny, the malignity of witty ridicule, and the evil prepossessions of unjust hatreds.

The present, like the preceding work, includes other subjects than the one indicated by the title, and indeed they are both subservient to a higher purpose—that of our Literary History.

There is a French work, entitled "Querelles Littéraires," quoted in "Curiosities of Literature," many years ago. Whether I derive the idea of the present from the French source I cannot tell. I could point out a passage in the great Lord BACON which might have afforded the hint. But I am inclined to think, that what induced me to select this topic, was the interest which JOHNSON has given to the literary quarrels between *Dryden* and *Settle*, *Dennis* and *Addison*, &c.; and which Sir WALTER SCOTT, who, amid the fresh creations of fancy could delve for the buried truths of research, has thrown into his narrative of the quarrel of *Dryden* and *Luke Milbourne*.

From the French work I could derive no aid; and my plan is my own. I have fixed on each literary controversy to illustrate some principle, to portray some character, and to investigate some topic. Almost every controversy which occurred opened new views. With the subject, the character of the author connected itself; and with the character were associated those events of his life which reciprocally act on each other. I have always considered an author as a human being, who possesses at once two sorts of lives, the intellectual and the vulgar: in his books we trace the history of his mind, and in his actions those of human nature. It is this combination which interests the philosopher and the man of feeling; which provides the richest materials for reflection; and all those original details, which spring from the constituent principles of man. JOHNSON'S passion for literary history, and his great knowledge of the human heart, inspired at once the first and the finest model in this class of composition.

The Philosophy of Literary History was indeed the creation of BAYLE. He was the first who, by attempting a *critical dictionary*, taught us to think, and to be curious and vast in our researches. He ennobled a collection of facts by his reasonings, and exhibited them with the most miscellaneous illustrations; and thus conducting an apparently humble pursuit, with a higher spirit, he gave a new turn to our studies. It was felt through Europe; and many celebrated authors studied and repeated BAYLE. This father of a numerous race has an English as well as a French progeny.

JOHNSON wrote under many disadvantages; but, with scanty means, he has taught us a great end. Dr. BIRCH was the contemporary of JOHNSON. He excelled his predecessors; and yet he forms a striking contrast, as a literary historian. BIRCH was no philosopher, and I adduce him as an instance how a writer, possessing the most ample knowledge, and the most vigilant curiosity—one practised in all the secret arts of literary research in public repositories and in private collections, and eminently skilled in the whole science of bibliography—may yet fail with the public. The diligence of BIRCH has perpetuated his memory by a monument of MSS., but his touch was mortal to genius! He palsied the character which could never die; heroes sunk pusillanimously under his hand; and in his torpid silence, even MILTON seemed suddenly deprived of his genius.

I have freely enlarged in the *notes* to this work; a practice which is objectionable to many, but indispensable perhaps in this species of literary history.

The late Mr. CUMBERLAND, in a conversation I once held with him on this subject, triumphantly exclaimed, "You will not find a single note through the whole volume of my 'Life.' I never wrote a note. The ancients never wrote notes; but they introduced into their text all which was proper for the reader to know."

I agreed with that elegant writer, that a fine piece of essay-writing, such as his own "Life," required notes, no more than his novels and his comedies, among which it may be classed. I observed, that the ancients had no literary history; this was the result of the discovery of printing, the institution of national libraries, the general literary intercourse of Europe, and some other causes which are the growth almost of our own times. The ancients have written history without producing authorities.

Mr. CUMBERLAND was then occupied on a review of Fox's History; and of CLARENDON, which lay open before him,—he had been complaining, with all the irritable feelings of a dramatist, of the frequent suspensions and the tedious minuteness of his story.

I observed that *notes* had not then been discovered. Had Lord CLARENDON known their use, he had preserved the unity of design in his text. His Lordship has unskilfully filled it with all that historical furniture his diligence had collected, and with those minute discussions which his anxiety for truth, and his lawyer-like mode of scrutinising into facts and substantiating evidence, amassed. Had these been cast into *notes*, and were it now possible to pass them over in the present text, how would the story of the noble historian clear up! The greatness of his genius will appear when disencumbered of its unwieldy and misplaced accompaniments.

If this observation be just, it will apply with greater force to literary history itself, which, being often the mere history of the human mind, has to record opinions as well as events—to discuss as well as to narrate—to show how accepted truths become suspicious,—or to confirm what has hitherto rested in obscure uncertainty, and to balance contending opinions and opposite facts with critical nicety. The multiplied means of our knowledge now opened to us, have only rendered our curiosity more urgent in its claims, and raised up the most diversified objects. These, though accessaries to the leading one of our inquiries, can never melt together in the continuity of a text. It is to prevent all this disorder, and to enjoy all the usefulness and the pleasure of this various knowledge, which has produced the invention of *notes* in literary history. All this forms a sort of knowledge peculiar to the present more enlarged state of literature. Writers who delight in curious and rare extracts, and in the discovery of new facts and new views of things, warmed by a fervour of research which brings everything nearer to our eye and close to our touch, study to throw contemporary feelings in their page. Such rare extracts, and such new facts, BAYLE eagerly sought, and they delighted JOHNSON: but all this luxury of literature can only be produced to the public eye, in the variegated forms of *notes*.

WARBURTON, AND HIS QUARRELS:

INCLUDING AN ILLUSTRATION OF

HIS LITERARY CHARACTER.

The name of Warburton more familiar to us than his Works—declared to be "a Colossus" by a Warburtonian, who afterwards shrinks the image into "a human size"—Lowth's caustic retort on his Attorneyship—motives for the change to Divinity—his first literary mischances—Warburton and his Welsh Prophet—his Dedications—his mean flatteries—his taste more struck by the monstrous than the beautiful—the effects of his opposite studies—the SECRET PRINCIPLE which conducted Warburton through all his Works—the *curious* argument of his Alliance between Church and State—the *bold* paradox of his Divine Legation—the demonstration ends in a conjecture—Warburton lost in the labyrinth he had ingeniously constructed—confesses the harassed state of his mind—attacked by Infidels and Christians—his SECRET PRINCIPLE turns the poetical narrative of Æneas into the Eleusinian Mysteries—Hurd attacks Jortin; his Attic irony translated into plain English—Warburton's paradox on Eloquence; his levity of ideas renders his sincerity suspected—Leland refutes the whimsical paradox—Hurd attacks Leland—Leland's noble triumph—Warburton's SECRET PRINCIPLE operating in Modern Literature: on Pope's Essay on Man—Lord Bolingbroke the author of the Essay—Pope received Warburton as his tutelary genius—Warburton's systematic treatment of his friends and rival editors—his literary artifices and little intrigues—his Shakespeare—the whimsical labours of Warburton on Shakespeare annihilated by Edwards's "Canons of Criticism"—Warburton and Johnson—Edwards and Warburton's mutual attacks—the concealed motive of his edition of Shakespeare avowed in his justification—his SECRET PRINCIPLE further displayed in Pope's Works—attacks Akenside; Dyson's generous defence—correct Ridicule is a test of Truth, illustrated by a well-known case—Warburton a literary revolutionist; aimed to be a perpetual dictator—the ambiguous tendency of his speculations—the Warburtonian School supported by the most licentious principles—specimens of its peculiar style—the use to which Warburton applied the Dunciad—his Party: attentive to raise recruits—the active and subtle Hurd—his extreme sycophancy—Warburton, to maintain his usurped authority, adopted his system of literary quarrels.

THE name of WARBURTON is more familiar to us than his works: thus was it early *, thus it continues, and thus it will be with posterity! The cause may be worth our inquiry. Nor is there, in the whole compass of our literary history, a character more instructive for its greatness and its failures; none more adapted to excite our curiosity, and which can more completely gratify it.

Of great characters, whose actions are well known, and of those who, whatever claim they may have to distinction, are not so, ARISTOTLE has delivered a precept, with his accustomed sagacity. If *Achilles*, says the Stagirite, be the subject of our inquiries, since all know what he has done, we are simply to indicate his actions, without stopping to detail; but this would not serve for *Critias*; for whatever relates to him must be fully told, since he is known to few †;—a critical precept, which ought to be frequently applied, in the composition of this work.

The history of Warburton is now well known, the facts lie dispersed in the chronological biographer ‡; but the secret connexion which exists between them, if there shall be found to be any, has not yet been brought out; and it is my busi-

* One of his lively adversaries, the author of the "Canons of Criticism," observed the difficulty of writing against an author, whose reputation so much exceeded the knowledge of his works. "It is my misfortune," says EDWARDS, "in this controversy, to be engaged with a person, who is better known by his *name* than his *works*; or, to speak more properly, whose *works are more known than read*."—*Preface to the Canons of Criticism.*

† Aristotle's Rhetoric, B. III. c. 16.

‡ The materials for a life of WARBURTON have been arranged by Mr. NICHOLS, with his accustomed fidelity.—*See his Literary Anecdotes.*

ness to press these together; hence to demonstrate principles, or to deduce inferences.

The literary fame of Warburton was a portentous meteor: it seemed unconnected with the whole planetary system through which it rolled, and it was imagined to be darting amid new creations, as the tail of each hypothesis blazed with idle fancies *. Such extraordinary natures cannot be looked on with calm admiration, nor common hostility; all is the tumult of wonder about such a man; and his adversaries, as well as his friends, though differently affected, are often overcome by the same astonishment.

To a Warburtonian, the object of his worship looks indeed of colossal magnitude, in the glare thrown about that hallowed spot; nor is the divinity of common stature; but the light which makes him appear so great, must not be suffered to conceal from us the real standard by which only his greatness can be determined †: even literary enthusiasm, delightful to all generous tempers, may be too prodigal of its splendours, wasting itself while it shines; but truth remains behind! Truth, which, like the asbestos, is still unconsumed and unaltered amidst these glowing fires.

The genius of Warburton has called forth two remarkable anonymous criticisms, in one, all that the most splendid eloquence can bring to bear against this chief and his adherents ‡; and in the

* It is probable I may have drawn my meteor from our volcanic author himself, who had his lucid moments, even in the deliriums of his imagination. Warburton has rightly observed, in his Divine Legation, p. 203, that "*Systems*, *Schemes*, and *Hypotheses*, all bred of heat, in the warm regions of *Controversy*, like meteors in a troubled sky, have each its turn to *blaze* and *fly away*."

† It seems, even by the confession of a Warburtonian, that his master was of "a human size;" for when Bishop Lowth rallies the Warburtonians for their subserviency and credulity to their master, he aimed a gentle stroke at Dr. Brown, who, in his "Essays on the Characteristics," had poured forth the most vehement panegyric. In his "Estimate of Manners of the Times" too, after a long *tirade* of their badness in regard to taste and learning, he thus again eulogizes his mighty master:—"Himself is abused, and his friends insulted for his sake, by those who never read his writings; or, if they did, could neither taste nor comprehend them; while every little aspiring or despairing scribbler eyes him as Cassius did Cæsar: and whispers to his fellow—

'Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus; and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.'

No wonder, then, if the malice of the Lilliputian tribe be bent against this dreaded Gulliver; if they attack him with poisoned arrows, whom they cannot subdue by strength."

On this Lowth observes, that "this Lord Paramount in his pretensions *doth bestride the narrow world* of literature, and hath cast out his shoe over all the regions of science." This leads to a ludicrous comparison of Warburton, with King Pichrochole and his three ministers, who, in Urquhart's admirable version of the French wit, are Count Merdaille, the Duke of Smalltrash, and the Earl Swashbuckler, who set up for universal monarchy, and made an imaginary expedition through all the quarters of the world, as Rabelais records, and the bishop facetiously quotes.—Dr. Brown afterwards seemed to repent his panegyric, and contrives to make his gigantic hero shrink into a moderate size. "I believe still, every little aspiring fellow continues thus to eye him. For myself, I have ever considered him as *a man*, yet considerable among his species, as the following part of the paragraph *clearly demonstrates*. I speak of him here as *a Gulliver* indeed; yet still of *no more than human size*, and only apprehended to be of *colossal magnitude* by certain of his Lilliputian enemies." Thus subtilely would poor Dr. Brown save appearances! It must be confessed that, in a dilemma, never was a giant got rid of so easily!—The plain truth, however, was, that Brown was then on the point of quarrelling with Warburton; for he laments, in a letter to a friend, that "he had not avoided all personal panegyric. I had thus saved myself the trouble of setting right a character which I far overpainted." A part of this letter is quoted in the Biographia Britannica.

‡ "Tracts by Warburton and a Warburtonian, not admitted into the Collections of their respective Works," itself a collection which our shelves could ill spare, though maliciously republished by Dr. Parr. The dedication by Parr stands unparalleled for comparative criticism. It is the eruption of a volcano; it sparkles, it blazes, and scatters light and destruction. How deeply ought we to regret that this Nazarite suffered his strength to be shorn by the Delilahs of spurious Fame. Never did this man, with his gifted strength, grasp the pillars of a temple, to shake its atoms over Philistines; but pleased the child-like simplicity of his mind, by pulling down houses over the heads of their unlucky inhabitants. He consumed, in local and personal literary quarrels, a genius which might have made the next age his own. With all the stores of erudition, and all the eloquence of genius, he mortified a country parson

other all that taste, warmed by a spark of Warburtonian fire, can discriminate in an impartial decision*. Mine is a colder and less grateful task. I am but an historian! I have to creep along in the darkness of human events, to lay my hand cautiously on truths so difficult to touch; and which either the panegyrist or the writer of an invective cover over, and throw aside into corners.

Much of the moral, and something too of the physical dispositions of the man, enter into the literary character; and moreover, there are localities—the place where he resides, the circumstances which arise, and the habits he contracts; to all these, the excellences and the defects of some of our great literary characters may often be traced. With this clue we may thread our way through the labyrinth of Genius.

Warburton long resided in an obscure provincial town, the articled clerk of a country attorney†,

for his politics, and a London accoucheur for certain obstetrical labours performed on Horace; and now his collected writings lie before us, volumes unsaleable and unread. His insatiate vanity was so little delicate, as often to snatch its sweetmeat from a foul plate; it now appears, by the secret revelations in Griffiths's own copy of his "Monthly Review," that the writer of a very elaborate article on the works of Dr. Parr, was no less a personage than the Doctor himself. His egotism was so declamatory, that it unnaturalized a great mind, by the distortions of Johnsonian mimicry; his fierceness, which was pushed on to brutality on the unresisting, retreated with a child's terrors when resisted; and the pomp of petty pride in table-triumphs and evening-circles, ill compensated for the lost century he might have made his own!

Lord o'er the greatest, to the least a slave,
Half-weak, half-strong, half-timid, and half-brave;
To take a compliment of too much pride,
And yet most hurt when praises are denied.
Thou art so deep discerning, yet so blind,
So learn'd, so ignorant, cruel, yet so kind;
So good, so bad, so foolish, and so wise;—
By turns I love thee, and by turns despise.

MS. ANON. (said to be by the late Dr. HOMER.)

* The Quarterly Review, Vol. VII. p. 383.—So masterly a piece of criticism has rarely surprised the public in the leaves of a periodical publication. It comes, indeed, with the feelings of another age, and the reminiscences of the old and vigorous school. I cannot implicitly adopt all the sentiments of the critic, but it exhibits a highly-finished portrait, enamelled by the love of the artist.—This article was written by the late Dr. Whitaker, the historian of Craven, &c.

† When Warburton, sore at having been refused academical honours at Oxford, which were offered to Pope, then his fellow-traveller, and who, in consequence of this refusal, did himself not accept them—in his controversy with Lowth (then the Oxford Professor), gave way to his angry spirit, and struck at the University itself, for its political jesuitism, being a place where men "were taught to distinguish between *de facto* and *de jure*," caustic was the retort. Lowth, by singular felicity of application, touched on Warburton's original designation, in a character he hit on in Clarendon. After remonstrating with spirit and dignity on this petulant attack, which was not merely personal, Lowth continues:—"Had I not your Lordship's example to justify me, I should think it a piece of extreme impertinence to inquire where YOU were bred; though one might justly plead, in excuse for it, a natural curiosity to know *where* and *how* such a phenomenon was produced. It is commonly said that your Lordship's education was of that particular kind, concerning which it is a remark of that great judge of men and manners, Lord Clarendon (on whom you have, therefore, with a wonderful happiness of allusion, justness of application, and elegance of expression, conferred 'the unrivalled title of the Chancellor of Human Nature'), that it peculiarly disposes men to be proud, insolent, and pragmatical." Lowth, in a note, inserts Clarendon's character of Colonel Harrison: "He had been bred up in the place of a clerk, under a lawyer of good account in those parts; which kind of education introduces men into the language and practice of business; and if it be not resisted by the great ingenuity of the person, inclines young men to more pride than any other kind of breeding, and disposes them to be pragmatical and insolent." "Now, my Lord (Lowth continues), as you have in your whole behaviour, and in all your writings, remarkably distinguished yourself by your humility, lenity, meekness, forbearance, candour, humanity, civility, decency, good manners, good temper, moderation with regard to the opinions of others, and a modest diffidence of your own, this unpromising circumstance of your education is so far from being a disgrace to you, that it highly redounds to your praise."—*Lowth's Letter to the Author of the D. L.* p. 63.

Was ever weapon more polished and keen? This Attic style of controversy finely contrasts with the tasteless and fierce invective of the Warburtonians, although one of them is well known to have managed too adroitly the cutting instrument of irony; but the frigid malignancy of Hurd diminishes the pleasure we might find in his skill. Warburton ill concealed his vexation in the

and then an unsuccessful practising one. He seems, too, once to have figured as "a wine-

merchant in the Borough," and rose into notice as "the orator of a disputing club;" but, in all his shapes, still keen in literary pursuits, without literary connections; struggling with all the defects of a desultory and self-taught education, but of a bold aspiring character, he rejected, either in pride or in despair, his little trades, and took Deacon's orders—to exchange a profession, unfavourable to continuity of study, for another, more propitious to its indulgence*. In a word, he set off as a literary adventurer, who was to win his way by earning it from patronage.

contempt he vented in a letter to Hurd on this occasion. "All you say about Lowth's pamphlet breathes the purest spirit of friendship. His *wit* and his *reasoning*, God knows, and I also (as a certain critic said once in a matter of the like great importance), are much below the qualities that deserve those names."—He writes too of "this man's boldness in publishing his letters."—"If he expects an answer, he will certainly find himself disappointed; though I believe I could make *as good sport with this devil of a vice*, for the public diversion, as ever was made with him in the old Moralities."—But Warburton did reply! Had he ever possessed one feeling of taste, never would he have figured the elegant Lowth as this grotesque personage. He was, however, at that moment, sharply stung!

This circumstance of *Attorneyship* was not passed over in Mallet's "Familiar Epistle to the most impudent man living." Comparing, in the spirit of "familiarity," Arnall, an impudent scribbling attorney and political scribe, with Warburton, he says, "You have been an attorney as well as he, but a little more impudent than he was; for Arnall never presumed to conceal his turpitude under the gown and the scarf." But this is mere invective!

* I have given a tempered opinion of his motive for this sudden conversion from Attorneyship to Divinity; for it must not be concealed, in our enquiry into Warburton's character, that he has frequently been accused of a more worldly one. He was so fierce an advocate for some important causes he undertook, that his sincerity has been liable to suspicion; the pleader, in some points, certainly acting the part of a sophist. Were we to decide by the early appearances of his conduct, by the rapid change of his profession, by his obsequious servility to his Country-squire, and by what have been termed the hazardous "fooleries in criticism, and outrages in controversy," which he systematically pursued, he looks like one not in earnest, and more zealous to maintain the character of his own genius, than the cause he had espoused. Leland once exclaimed, "What are we to think of the writer and his intentions? Is he really sincere in his reasonings?" Certain it is, his paradoxes often alarmed his friends, to repeat the words of a great critic, by "the absurdity of his criticism, the heterodoxy of his tenets, and the brutality of his invectives." Our Juvenal, who, whatever might be the vehemence of his declamation, reflected always those opinions which floated about him, has drawn a full-length figure. He accounts for Warburton's early motive in taking the cassock, as being

"——————— thereto drawn
By some faint omens of the Lawn,
And on the truly Christian plan,
To make himself a gentleman;
A title, in which Form arrayed him,
Tho' Fate ne'er thought of when she made him.
To make himself a man of note,
He in defence of Scripture wrote:
So long he wrote, and long about it,
That e'en believers 'gan to doubt it.
He wrote too of the Holy Ghost;
Of whom, no more than doth a post,
He knew; nor, should an angel show him,
Would he or know, or choose to know him."
CHURCHILL'S *Duellist*.

I would not insinuate that Warburton is to be ranked among the class he so loudly denounced, that of "Free-thinkers;" his mind, warm with imagination, seemed often tinged with credulity. But from his want of sober-mindedness, we cannot always prove his earnestness in the cause he advocated. He often sports with his fancies; he breaks out into the most familiar levity; and maintains, too broadly, subtile and refined principles, which evince more of the political than the primitive Christian. It is certain his infidelity was greatly suspected; and Hurd, to pass over the stigma of Warburton's sudden conversion to the Church, insinuates that "*an early seriousness of mind* determined him to the Ecclesiastical profession."—"It may be so," says the critic in the Quarterly Review, no languid admirer of this great man; "but the symptoms of that *seriousness were very equivocal afterwards;* and the *certainty of an early provision, from a generous patron in the country*, may perhaps be considered by those who are disposed to assign human conduct to ordinary motives, as quite adequate to the effect."

Dr. Parr is indignant at such surmises; but the feeling is more honourable than the decision! In an admirable character of Warburton in the Westminster Magazine for 1779, it is acknowledged, "at his outset in life he was suspected of being inclined to Infidelity; and it was not till many years had elapsed, that the orthodoxy of his opinions was generally assented to." On this Dr. Parr observes,

His first mischances were not of a nature to call forth that intrepidity which afterwards hardened into the leading feature of his character. Few great authors have begun their race with less auspicious omens, though an extraordinary event in the life of an author happened to Warburton,—he had secured a patron, before he was an author.

The first publication of his which we know, was his "Translations in prose and verse from Roman Poets, Orators, and Historians." 1724. He was then about twenty-five years of age. The fine forms of classic beauty could never be cast in so rough a mould as his prose; and his turgid unmusical verses betrayed qualities of mind incompatible with the delicacy of poetry. Four years afterwards he repeated another bolder attempt, in his "Critical and Philosophical Inquiry into the Causes of Prodigies and Miracles." After this publication, I wonder Warburton was ever suspected of infidelity or even scepticism *. So radically deficient in Warburton was that fine internal feeling which we call taste, that through his early writings he acquired not one solitary charm of diction †, and scarcely betrayed, amid his

"Why Dr. Warburton was *ever* suspected of secret infidelity I know not. What he was *inclined to think* on subjects of religion, before, perhaps, he had leisure or ability to examine them, depends only upon obscure surmise, or vague report." The words *inclined to think* seems a periphrase for *secret infidelity*. Our critic attributes these reports to "an English dunce, whose blunders and calumnies are now happily forgotten, and repeated by a French buffoon, whose morality is not commensurate with his wit."—*Tracts* by Warburton, &c., p. 186.

"The English Dunce" I do not recollect; of this sort there are so many! Voltaire is "the French buffoon;" who, indeed, compares Warburton in his Bishopric, to Peachum in the Beggar's Opera—who, as Keeper of Newgate, was for hanging all his old accomplices!

* Warburton was far more extravagant in a later attempt which he made to expound the odd visions of a cracked-brain Welchman, a prophesying knave; a knave by his own confession, and a prophet by Warburton's. This commentary, inserted in Jortin's "Remarks on Ecclesiastical History," considerably injured the reputation of Jortin. The story of Warburton and his Welch Prophet, would of itself be sufficient to detect the shiftings and artifices of his genius. Rice or Arise Evans! was one of the many prophets who rose up in Oliver's fanatical days; and Warburton had the hardihood to insert, in Jortin's learned work, a strange commentary to prove that Arise Evans, in Cromwell's time, in his "Echo from Heaven," had manifestly *prophesied the Hanoverian Succession!* The Welchman was a knave by his own account in subscribing with his *right* hand the confession he calls his prophecy, before a justice, and with his *left*, that which was his recantation, signed before the recorder, adding, "I know the bench and the people thought I recanted; but, alas! they were deceived;" and this Warburton calls "an uncommon fetch of wit," to save the truth of the prophecy, though not the honour of the prophet. If Evans meant anything, he meant what was then floating in all men's minds, the probable restoration of the Stuarts. By this prelude of that inventive genius which afterwards commented, in the same spirit, on the Æneid of Virgil, and the "Divine Legation itself," and made the same sort of discoveries, he fixed himself in this dilemma: either Warburton was a greater impostor than Arise Evans, or he was more credulous than even any follower of the Welch prophet, if he really had any. But the truth is, that Warburton was always writing for a present purpose, and believed, and did not believe, as it happened. "Ordinary men believe *one* side of a contradiction at a time, whereas his Lordship" (says his admirable antagonist) "frequently believes, or at least defends *both*. So that it would have been no great wonder if he should maintain that Evans was both a real prophet and an impostor." Yet this is not the only awkward attitude into which Warburton has here thrown himself; to strain the vision of the raving Welchman to events of which he could have no notion, Warburton has plunged into the most ludicrous difficulties, all which ended, as all his discoveries have done, in making the fortune of an adversary who, like the Momus of Homer, has raised through the skies "inextinguishable laughter," in the amusing tract of "Confusion worse confounded, Rout on Rout, or the Bishop of G—'s Commentary on Arise Evans; by Indignatio, 1772." The writer was the learned Henry Taylor, the author of Ben Mordecai's Apology.

† The correct taste of Lowth with some humour describes the last sentence of the "Enquiry on Prodigies" as "the Musa Pedestris got on horseback in a high prancing style." He printed it in measured lines, without, however, changing the place of a single word, and it produced blank verse. Thus it reads—

> "Methinks I see her like the mighty Eagle
> renewing her immortal youth, and purging
> her opening sight, at the unobstructed beams
> of our benign meridian Sun," &c.

Such a glowing metaphor, in the uncouth prose of Warburton, startled Lowth's classical ear. It was indeed "the Musa Pedestris who had got on horseback in a high prancing style;" for as it has

impurity of taste, that nerve and spirit which afterwards crushed all rival force. His translations *in imitation of Milton's style* betray his utter want of ear and imagination. He attempted to suppress both these works during his life-time.

When these unlucky productions were republished by Dr. Parr, the *Dedications* were not forgotten; they were both addressed to the same opulent baronet, not omitting "the virtues" of his lady the Countess of Sunderland, whose marriage he calls "so divine a union." Warburton had shown no want of judgment in the choice of his patrons; for they had more than one living in their gift—and, perhaps, knowing his patrons, none in the Dedications themselves. They had, however, this absurdity; that in freely exposing the servile practices of dedicators, the writer was himself indulging in that luxurious sin, which he so forcibly terms "Public Prostitution." This early management betrays no equivocal symptoms of that traffic in *Dedications*, of which he has been so severely accused*, and of that paradoxical turn and hardy effrontery, which distinguished his after-life. These Dedications led to preferment, and thus hardily was laid the foundation-stone of his aspiring fortunes.

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since been pointed out, it is a well-known passage towards the close of the Areopagitica of Milton, whose prose is so often purely poetical. See Birch's Edition of Milton's Prose Works, I. 158. Warburton was familiarly conversant with our great vernacular writers at a time when their names generally were better known than their works, and when it was considered safe to pillage their most glorious passages. Warburton has been convicted of snatching their purple patches, and sowing them into his coarser web, without any acknowledgment; he did this in the present remarkable instance, and at a later day in the preface to his Julian, he laid violent hands on one of Raleigh's splendid metaphors.

* When Warburton was considered as a Colossus of literature, RALPH, the political writer, pointed a severe allusion to the awkward figure he makes in these Dedications. "The Colossus himself creeps between the legs of the late Sir Robert Sutton; in what posture, or for what purpose, need not be explained."

CHURCHILL has not passed by unnoticed Warburton's humility, even to meanness, combined with pride which could rise to haughtiness.

"He was so proud, that should he meet
The twelve apostles in the street,
He'd turn his nose up at them all,
And shove his Saviour from the wall."

Yet this man

——— "Fawned through all his life,
For patrons first, then for a wife;
Wrote *Dedications*, which must make
The heart of every Christian quake."

The Duellist.

It is certain that the proud and supercilious Warburton long crouched and fawned. MALLET, at least, well knew all that passed between Warburton and Pope. In the "Familiar Epistle" he asserts, that Warburton was introduced to Pope by his "nauseous flattery." A remarkable instance, besides the Dedications we have noticed, occurred in his correspondence with Sir Thomas Hanmer. He did not venture to attack "The Oxford Editor," as he sarcastically distinguishes him, without first demanding back his letters, which were immediately returned, from Sir Thomas's high sense of honour. Warburton might otherwise have been shown strangely to contradict himself, for in these letters he had been most lavish of his flatteries and encomiums on the man whom he covered with ridicule in the preface to his Shakespeare. See "An Answer to certain passages in Mr. W.'s Preface to Shakespeare, 1748."

His dedication, to the plain unlettered Ralph Allen of Bath, his greatest of patrons, of his "Commentary on Pope's Essay on Man," is written in the same spirit as those to Sir Robert Sutton; but the former unlucky gentleman was more publicly exposed by it. The subject of this Dedication turns on "the growth and progress of *Fate*, divided into four principal branches!" There is an episode about *Free-will* and *Nature* and *Grace*, and "a *contrivance* of Leibnitz about *Fatalism*." Ralph Allen was a good Quaker-like man, but he must have lost his temper if he ever read the Dedication! Let us not, however, imagine that Warburton was at all insensible to this violation of literary decorum; he only sacrificed *propriety* to what he considered a more urgent principle—his own personal interest. No one had a juster conception of the true nature of *Dedications*; for he says in the famous one "to the Freethinkers:"—"I could never approve the custom of dedicating books to men whose professions made them strangers to the subjects. A Discourse on the Ten Predicaments to a Leader of Armies, or a System of Casuistry to a Minister of State, always appeared to me a high absurdity."

All human characters are mixed—true! yet still we feel indignant to discover some of the greatest, often combining the most opposite qualities; and then they are not so much mixed as the parts are naturally joined together. Could one imagine that so lofty a character as Warburton could have been liable to have incurred even the random stroke of the Satirist? whether true or false, the events of his life, better known at this

Till his thirtieth year, Warburton evinced a depraved taste, but a craving appetite for knowledge. His mind was constituted to be more struck by the Monstrous than the Beautiful, much like that Sicilian prince who furnished his villa with the most hideous figures imaginable: the delight resulting from harmonious and delicate forms raised emotions of too weak a nature to move his obliquity of taste; roused, however, by the surprise excited by colossal ugliness. The discovery of his intellectual tastes, at this obscure period of his life, besides in those works we have noticed, is confirmed by one of the most untoward accidents which ever happened to a literary man; it was the chance-discovery of a letter he had written to one of the heroes of the Dunciad, forty years before. At the time that letter was written, his literary connexions were formed with second-rate authors; he was in strict intimacy with Concanen and Theobald, and other "ingenious gentlemen who made up our last night's conversation," as he expresses himself*. This letter is full of the heresies of taste: one of the most anomalous is the comment on that well-known passage in Shakespeare, on "the genius and the mortal instruments;" Warburton's is a miraculous specimen of fantastical sagacity and critical delirium, or the art of discovering meanings never meant, and of illustrations the author could never have known. Warburton declares to "the ingenious gentlemen," (whom afterwards with a Pharaoh's heart, he hanged by dozens to posterity in the Dunciad,) that "Pope borrowed for want of genius;" that poet, who when the day arrived he was to comment on as the first of poets! His insulting criticisms on the popular writings of Addison,—his contempt for what Young calls "sweet elegant Virgilian prose,"—show how utterly insensible he was to that classical taste in which Addison had constructed his materials. But he who could not taste the delicacy of Addison, it may be imagined might be in raptures with the rant of Lee. There is an unerring principle in the false sublime: it seems to be governed by laws, though they are not ours; and we know what it will like, that is, we know what it will mistake for what ought not to be liked, as surely as we can anticipate what will delight correct taste. Warburton has pronounced one of the raving passages of poor Nat, "to contain not only the most sublime, but the most judicious imagery that poetry could conceive or paint." Joseph Warton, who indignantly rejects it from his edition of Pope, asserts, that "we have not in our language a more striking example of true turgid expression, and genuine fustian and bombast.†" Yet such was the man whom

day than in his own, will show. Churchill says, that

"He could cringe and creep, be civil,
And hold a stirrup for the devil,
If, *in a journey to his mind*,
He'd let him mount, and ride behind."

The author of the "Canons of Criticism," with all his sprightly sarcasm, gives a history of Warburton's later Dedications. "The first edition of 'The Alliance' came out without a dedication, but was presented to the bishops; and when nothing came of that, the second was addressed to both the Universities; and when nothing came of that, the third was dedicated to a noble Earl, and nothing has yet come of that." Appendix to "Canons of Criticism," seventh edit. 261.

* This letter was written in 1726, and first found by Dr. Knight in 1750, in fitting up a house where Concanen had probably lodged. It was suppressed, till Akenside, in 1766, printed it in a sixpenny pamphlet, entitled, "An Ode to Mr. Edwards." He preserved the curiosity, with "all its peculiarities of grammar, spelling, and punctuation." The insulted poet took a deep revenge for the contemptuous treatment he had received from the modern Stagirite. The "peculiarities" betray most evident marks of the self-taught lawyer; the orthography and the double letters were minted in the office. When I looked for the letter in *Akenside's Works*, I discovered that it had been silently dropped. Some interest, doubtless, had been made to suppress it, for Warburton was humbled when reminded of it. Malone, fortunately, has preserved it in his Shakspeare, where it may be found, in a place not likely to be looked into for it, at the close of Julius Cæsar: this literary curiosity had otherwise been lost for posterity; its whole history is a series of wonderful escapes.

By this document we became acquainted with the astonishing fact, that Warburton, early in life, was himself one of those very dunces whom he has so unmercifully registered in their Doomsday-book; one who admired the genius of his brothers, and spoke of Pope's with the utmost contempt!

† Lee introduces Alexander the Great, saying,

"When Glory, like the dazzling eagle, stood
Perch'd on my beaver in the Granic flood,
When Fortune's self my standard trembling bore,
And the pale Fates stood frighted on the shore;
When the Immortals on the billows rode,
And I myself appear'd the leading God!"

In the province of taste Warburton was always at sea without chart or compass, and was as unlucky in his panegyric on Milton as on Lee. He calls the "Paradise Regained" "a charming poem, *nothing inferior* in the *poetry* and the

ill-fortune (for the public at least) had chosen to become the commentator of our greater poets! Again Churchill throws light on our character:—

"He, with an all-sufficient air,
Placed himself in the critic's chair,
And wrote, to advance his Maker's praise,
Comments on rhymes, and notes on plays—
A judge of genius, though, confest,
With not one spark of genius blest:
Among the first of critics placed,
Though free from every taint of taste."

Not encouraged by the reception his first literary efforts received, but having obtained some preferment from his patron, we now come to a critical point in his life. He retreated from the world, and, during a seclusion of near twenty years, persevered in uninterrupted studies. The force of his character placed him in the first order of thinking beings. This resolution no more to court the world for literary favours, but to command it by hardy preparation for mighty labours, displays a noble retention of the appetite for fame; Warburton scorned to be a scribbler!

Had this great man journalised his readings, as Gibbon has done, we should perhaps be more astonished at his miscellaneous pursuits. He read everything, and, I suspect, with little distinction, and equal delight*. Curiosity, even to its delirium, was his first passion; which produced those new systems of hypothetical reasoning by which he startled the world; and his efforts to save his most ingenious theories from absurdity resembled, to use his own emphatic words applied to the philosophy of Leibnitz, "a contrivance against Fatalism," for though his genius has given a value to the wildest paradoxes, paradoxes they remain.

But if Warburton read so much, it was not to enforce opinions already furnished to his hands, or with cold scepticism to reject them, leaving the reader in despair. He read that he might write what no one else had written, and which at least required to be refuted before it was condemned. He hit upon a SECRET PRINCIPLE, which prevails through all his works, and this was INVENTION; a talent, indeed, somewhat dangerous to introduce in researches where Truth, and not Fancy, was to be addressed. But even with all this originality he was not free from imitation, and has even been accused of borrowing largely without hinting at his obligations. He had certainly one favourite model before him: Warburton has delineated the portrait of a certain author with inimitable minuteness, while he caught its general effect; we feel that the artist, in tracing the resemblance of another, is inspired by all the flattery of a self-painter—he perceived the kindred features, and he loved them!

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sentiments to the Paradise Lost." Such extravagance could only have proceeded from a critic too little sensible to the essential requisites of poetry itself.

* Such opposite studies shot themselves into the most fantastical forms in his rocket-writings, whether they streamed in "The Divine Legation," or sparkled in "The Origin of Romances," or played about in giving double senses to Virgil, Pope, and Shakespeare. CHURCHILL, with a good deal of ill-nature and some truth, describes them,

"A curate first, he read and read,
And laid in, while he should have fed
The souls of his neglected flock,
Of reading, such a mighty stock,
That he o'ercharged the weary brain
With more than she could well contain;
More than she was with spirit fraught
To turn and methodise to thought;
And which, *like ill-digested food,*
To humours turn'd, and not to blood."

The opinion of BENTLEY, when he saw "The Divine Legation," was a sensible one. "This man," said he, "has a monstrous appetite, with a very bad digestion."

The Warburtonians seemed to consider his great work, as the Bible by which all literary men were to be sworn. LOWTH ridicules their credulity. "The Divine Legation, it seems, contains in it all knowledge, divine and human, ancient and modern: it is a perfect Encyclopædia, including all history, criticism, divinity, law, politics, from the law of Moses down to the Jew bill, and from Egyptian hieroglyphics to modern Rebus-writing, &c."

"In the 2014 pages of the unfinished 'Divine Legation,'" observes the sarcastic GIBBON, "four hundred authors are quoted, from St. Austin down to Scarron and Rabelais!"

Yet, after all that satire and wit have denounced, listen to an enlightened votary of Warburton. He asserts, that "the Divine Legation has taken its place at the head, not to say of English theology, but almost of English literature. To the composition of this prodigious performance, HOOKER and STILLINGFLEET could have contributed the erudition, CHILLINGWORTH and LOCKE the acuteness, TAYLOR an imagination even more wild and copious, SWIFT, and perhaps EACHARD, the sarcastic vein of wit; but what power of understanding, except WARBURTON'S, could first have amassed all these materials, and then compacted them into a bulky and elaborate work, so consistent and harmonious?"—*Quarterly Review*, vol. vii.

This author was BAYLE! And I am unfolding the character of Warburton, in copying the very original portrait:

"Mr. Bayle is of a quite different character from these Italian sophists: a writer, whose strength and clearness of *reasoning* can be equalled only by the gaiety, easiness, and delicacy of his *wit; who, pervading human nature with a glance,* STRUCK INTO THE PROVINCE OF PARADOX, *as an exercise for the restless vigour of his mind:* who, with a soul superior to the sharpest attacks of fortune, and a heart practised to the best philosophy, had *not yet enough of real greatness, to overcome that last foible of superior geniuses,* the temptation of honour, which the ACADEMIC EXERCISE OF WIT is conceived to bring to its professors*."

Here, then, we discover the SECRET PRINCIPLE which conducted Warburton through all his works, although of the most opposite natures. I do not give this as an opinion to be discussed, but as a fact to be demonstrated.

The faculties so eminent in Bayle were equally so in Warburton. In his early studies he had particularly applied himself to logic; and was not only a vigorous reasoner, but one practised in all the *finesse* of dialectics. He had wit, fertile indeed, rather than delicate; and a vast body of erudition, collected in the uninterrupted studies of twenty years. But it was the SECRET PRINCIPLE, or, as he calls it, "*the Academic exercise of Wit,*" on an enlarged system, which carried him so far in the new world of INVENTION he was creating.

This was a new characteristic of investigation; it led him on to pursue his profounder inquiries beyond the clouds of antiquity; for what he could not *discover*, he CONJECTURED and ASSERTED. Objects, which in the hands of other men were merely matters resting on authentic researches, now received the stamp and lustre of original invention. Nothing was to be seen in the state in which others had viewed it; the hardiest paradoxes served his purpose best, and this licentious principle produced unlooked-for discoveries. He humoured his taste, always wild and unchastised, in search of the monstrous and the extravagant; and, being a wit, he delighted in finding resemblances in objects which to more regulated minds had no similarity whatever. *Wit* may exercise its ingenuity as much in combining *things* unconnected with each other, as in its odd assemblage of *ideas;* and Warburton, as a literary antiquary, proved to be as witty in his combinations, as BUTLER and CONGREVE in their comic images. As this principle took full possession of the mind of this man of genius, the practice became so familiar, that it is possible he might at times have been credulous enough to have confided in his own reveries. As he forcibly expressed himself on one of his adversaries, Dr. STEBBING, "Thus it is to have to do with a head, whose *sense is all run to system.*" "His Academic Wit" now sported amid whimsical theories, pursued bold but inconclusive arguments, marked out subtile distinctions, and discovered incongruous resemblances; but they were maintained by an imposing air of conviction, furnished with the most prodigal erudition, and they struck out many ingenious combinations. The importance or the curiosity of the topics awed or delighted his readers; the principle, however licentious, by the surprise it raised, seduced the lovers of novelties. Father HARDOUIN had studied as hard as Warburton, rose as early, and retired to rest as late, and the obliquity of his intellect resembled that of Warburton—but he was a far inferior genius; he only discovered that the classical works of antiquity, the finest compositions of the human mind, in ages of its utmost refinement, had been composed by the droning monks of the middle ages; a discovery which only surprised by its tasteless absurdity—but the absurdities of Warburton had more dignity, were more delightful, and more dangerous: they existed, as it were, in a state of illusion, but illusion which required as much genius and learning as his own to dissipate. His spells were to be disturbed only by a magician, great as himself. Conducted by this solitary principle, Warburton undertook, as it were, a magical voyage into antiquity. He passed over the ocean of time, sailing amid rocks, and half lost on quicksands; but he never failed to raise up some *terra incognita;* or point at some scene of the *Fata Morgana,* some earthly spot, painted in the heaven one knows not how.

In this secret principle of resolving to *invent,* what no other had before conceived, by means of *conjecture* and *assertion;* and of maintaining his theories with all the pride of a sophist, and all the fierceness of an inquisitor, we have the key to all the contests by which this great mind so long supported his literary usurpations.

The first step the giant took showed the mightiness of his stride. His first great work was the famous "Alliance between Church and State."

* The Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated, vol. i. sect. iv. Observe the remarkable expression, "that last foible of superior genius." He had, evidently, running in his mind, Milton's line on Fame,

"That last infirmity of noble mind."

In such an exalted state was Warburton's mind, when he was writing this, his own character.

It surprised the world, who saw the most important subject depending on a mere *curious* argument, which, like all political theories, was liable to be overthrown by writers of opposite principles *. The term "Alliance" seemed to the dissenters to infer that the *church* was an independent power, forming a contract with the *state*, and not acknowledging that it is only an integral part, like that of the *army* or the *navy* †. Warburton had not probably decided, at that time, on the principle of ecclesiastical power: whether it was paramount by its divine origin, as one party asserted; or whether, as the new philosophers, Hobbes, Selden, and others, insisted, the spiritual was secondary to the civil power ‡.

The intrepidity of this vast genius appears in the plan of his greater work. The omission of a future state of reward and punishment, in the Mosaic writings, was perpetually urged as a proof that the mission was not of divine origin: the ablest defenders strained at obscure or figurative passages, to force unsatisfactory inferences; but they were looking after what could not be found. Warburton at once boldly acknowledged it was not there; at once adopted all the objections of the infidels; and roused the curiosity of both parties by the hardy assertion, that this very *omission* was a *demonstration* of its divine origin §.

The first idea of this new project was bold and delightful, and the plan magnificent. Paganism,

* The author of "The Canons of Criticism" addressed a severe sonnet to Warburton; and alludes to the "Alliance:"—

"Reign he sole king in paradoxal land,
And for Utopia plan his idle schemes
Of *visionary leagues, alliance vain*
'Twixt Will *and* Warburton—"

On which he adds this note, humorously stating the grand position of the work:—"The whole argument, by which the *alliance between church and state* is established, Mr. Warburton founds upon this supposition—'that people, considering themselves in a religious capacity, may contract with themselves, considered in a civil capacity.' The conceit is ingenious, but is not his own. *Scrub*, in the 'Beaux Stratagem,' had found it out long ago: he considers himself as acting the different parts of all the servants in the family; and so *Scrub*, the coachman, ploughman, or justice's clerk, might contract with *Scrub*, the butler, for such a quantity of ale as the other assumed character demanded."—Appendix, p. 261.

† Monthly Review, vol. xvi. p. 324, the organ of the dissenters.

‡ See article HOBBES, for his system. The great Selden was an *Erastian*; a distinction extremely obscure. *Erastus* was a Swiss physician of little note, who was for restraining the ecclesiastical power from all temporal jurisdiction. Selden did him the honour of adopting his principles. Selden wrote against the *divine right* of tithes, but allowed the *legal* right; which gave, at first, great offence to the clergy, who afterwards perceived the propriety of his argument, as Wotton has fully acknowledged.

§ It does not always enter into the design of these volumes to examine those great works which produced *literary quarrels*. But some may be glad to find here a word on this original project.

The grand position of the *Divine Legation* is, that the knowledge of the immortality of the soul, or a future state of reward and punishment, is absolutely necessary in the moral government of the universe. The author shows how it has been inculcated by all good legislators, so that no religion could ever exist without it; but the Jewish could, from its peculiar government, which was theocracy—a government where the presence of God himself was perpetually manifested by miracles and new ordinances; and hence temporal rewards and punishments were sufficient for that people, to whom the unity and power of the Godhead were never doubtful. As he proceeded, he would have opened a new argument, viz., that the Jewish religion was only the *part* of a revelation, showing the necessity of a further one for its *completion*; which produced Christianity.

When Warburton was in good spirits with his great work (for he was not always so), he wrote thus to a friend:—"You judge right, that the *next* volume of the D. L. will not be the *last*. I thought I had told you that I had divided the work into three parts: the first, gives you a view of Paganism; the second, of Judaism; and the third, of Christianity. *You will wonder* how this last inquiry can come into *so simple an argument* as that which I undertake to enforce. I have not room to tell you more than this—that after I have proved a future state not to be, *in fact*, in the Mosaic dispensation, I next show, that, if Christianity be true, *it could not possibly be there*; and this necessitates me to explain the nature of Christianity, with which the whole ends. But this *inter nos*. If it be known, I should possibly have somebody writing against *this part too* before it appears."

Nichols's Lit. Anec., vol. v., p. 551.

Thus he exults in the true tone, and with all the levity, of a sophist. It is well that a true feeling of religion does not depend on the quirks and quibbles of human reasonings, or, what are as fallible, on masses of fanciful erudition.

Judaism, and Christianity, the three great religions of mankind, were to be marshalled in all their pomp, and their awe, and their mystery. But the procession changed to a battle! To maintain one great paradox, he was branching out into innumerable ones. This great work was never concluded: the author wearied himself, without, however, wearying his readers; and, as his volumes appeared, he was still referring to his argument, "as far as it is yet advanced." The *demonstration* appeared in great danger of ending in a *conjecture*;] and this work, always beginning and never ending, proved to be the glory and misery of his life*. In perpetual conflict with those numerous adversaries it roused, Warburton often shifted his ground, and broke into so many divisions, that when he cried out, Victory! his scattered forces seemed rather to be in flight than in pursuit†.

The same SECRET PRINCIPLE led him to turn the poetical narrative of Æneas in the infernal regions, an episode evidently imitated by Virgil from his Grecian master, into a minute description of the initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries. A notion so perfectly new, was at least worth a common-place truth. Was it not delightful, to have so many particulars detailed of a secret transaction, which even its contemporaries of two thousand years ago did not presume to know anything about? Father Hardouin seems to have opened the way for Warburton, since he had discovered that the whole Æneid was an allegorical voyage of St. Peter to Rome! When Jortin, in

* Warburton lost himself in the labyrinth he had so ingeniously constructed. This work harassed his days, and exhausted his intellect. Observe the tortures of a mind, even of so great a mind as that of Warburton's, when it sacrifices all to the perishable vanity of sudden celebrity. Often he flew from his task in utter exhaustion and despair. He had quitted the smooth and even line of truth, to wind about and split himself on all the crookedness of paradoxes. He paints his feelings, in a letter to Birch. He says, "I was so disgusted with an old subject, that I had deferred it from month to month, and year to year." He had recourse to "an expedient;" which was, "to set the press on work, and so oblige himself to supply copy." Such is the confession of the author of the "Divine Legation!" this "encyclopædia" of all ancient and modern lore—all to proceed from "a simple argument!" But when he describes his sufferings, hard is the heart of that literary man who cannot sympathise with such a giant caught in the toils! I give his words:—"Distractions of various kinds, inseparable from human life, joined with a naturally melancholy habit, contribute greatly to increase my indolence. This makes my reading wild and desultory; and I seek refuge from *the uneasiness of thought*, from any book, let it be what it will. *By my manner of writing upon subjects, you would naturally imagine they afford me pleasure, and attach me thoroughly. I will assure you*, No!"

Nichols's Lit. Anec., vol. v., p. 562.

Warburton had not the cares of a family: they were merely literary ones. The secret cause of his "melancholy," and his "indolence," and that "want of attachment and pleasure to his subjects," which his friends "naturally imagined" afforded him so much, was the controversies he had kindled, and the polemical battles he had raised about him. However boldly he attacked in return, his heart often sickened in privacy; for how often must he have beheld his noble and his whimsical edifices built on sands, which the waters were perpetually eating into!

At the last interview of Warburton with Pope, the dying poet exhorted him to proceed with "The Divine Legation." "Your reputation," said he, "as well as your duty, is concerned in it. People say you can get no farther in your proof. Nay, Lord Bolingbroke himself bids me expect no such thing." This anecdote is rather extraordinary; for it appears in "Owen Ruffhead's Life of Pope," p. 497, a work written under the eye of Warburton himself; and in which I think I could point out some strong touches from his own hand, on certain important occasions, when he would not trust to the creeping dulness of Ruffhead.

† His temerity had raised against him not only infidels, but Christians. If any pious clergyman now wrote in favour of the opinion that God's people believed in the immortality of the soul,—which can we doubt they did? and which Menasseh Ben Israel has written his treatise, "De Resurrectione Mortuorum," to prove—it was a strange sight to behold a bishop seeming to deny so rational and religious a creed! Even Dr. Balguy confessed to Warburton, that "there was one thing, in the argument of the 'Divine Legation,' that stuck more with candid men than all the rest: how a religion, without a future state, could be worthy of God!" This Warburton promised to satisfy, by a fresh appendix. His volatile genius, however, was condemned to "the pelting of a merciless storm." Lowth told him:—"You give yourself out as *demonstrator* of the *divine legation* of Moses; it has been often demonstrated before; a young student in theology might undertake to give a better—that is, a more satisfactory and irrefragable demonstration of it, in five pages, than you have done in five volumes."

Lowth's Letter to Warburton, p. 12.

one of his "Six Dissertations," modestly illustrated Virgil by an interpretation inconsistent with Warburton's strange discovery, it produced a memorable quarrel. Then Hurd, the future shield, scarcely the sword, of Warburton, made his first sally; a dapper, subtle, and cold-blooded champion, who could dextrously turn about the polished weapon of irony. So much our *Railleur* admired the volume of Jortin, that he favoured him with "A Seventh Dissertation, addressed to the Author of the Sixth, on the Delicacy of Friendship," one of the most malicious, but the keenest pieces of irony. It served as the foundation of a new School of Criticism, in which the arrogance of the master was to be supported by the pupil's contempt of men, often his superiors. To interpret Virgil differently from the modern Stagirite, was, by the aggravating art of the ridiculer, to be considered as the violation of a moral feeling*. Jortin bore the slow torture, and the teasing of Hurd's dissecting-knife, in dignified silence.

At length a rising genius demonstrated how Virgil could not have described the Eleusinian Mysteries in the sixth book of the Æneid. One blow from the arm of Gibbon shivered the allegorical fairy palace into glittering fragments†.

When the sceptical Middleton, in his "Essay on the Gift of Tongues," pretended to think that "an inspired language would be perfect in its kind, with all the purity of Plato and the eloquence of Cicero," and then asserted that "the style of the New Testament was utterly rude and barbarous, and abounding with every fault that can possibly deform a language;" Warburton, as was his custom, instantly acquiesced; but hardily maintained that "*this very barbarism was one certain mark of a divine original*‡."—The curious may follow his subtile argument in his "Doctrine of Grace;" but, in delivering this paradox, he struck at the fundamental principles of eloquence: he dilated on all the abuses of that human art. It was precisely his utter want of taste, which afforded him so copious an argument; for he asserted, that the principles of eloquence were arbitrary and chimerical, and its various modes "mostly fantastical;" and that, consequently, there was no such thing as a good taste§, except what the

* The Attic irony was translated into plain English, in "Remarks on Dr. Warburton's Account of the sentiments of the early Jews, 1757;" and the following rules for all who dissented from Warburton are deduced:—"You must not write on the same subject that he does. You must not glance at his arguments, even without naming him or so much as referring to him. If you find his reasonings ever so faulty, you must not presume to furnish him with better of your own, even though you prove, and are desirous to support his conclusions. When you design him a compliment, you must express it in full form, and with all the circumstance of panegyrical approbation, without impertinently qualifying your civilities by assigning a reason why you think he deserves them; as this might possibly be taken for a hint that you know something of the matter he is writing about as well as himself. You must never call any of his *discoveries* by the name of *conjectures*, though you allow them their full proportion of elegance, learning, &c.; for you ought to know, that this capital genius never proposed anything to the judgment of the public (though ever so new and uncommon), with diffidence in his life. Thus stands the decree prescribing our demeanour towards this sovereign in the Republic of Letters, as we find it promulged, and bearing date at the palace of Lincoln's Inn, Nov. 25, 1755."—From whence Hurd's "Seventh Dissertation" was dated.

† Gibbon's "Critical Observations on the Design of the Sixth Book of the Æneid." Dr. Parr considers this clear, elegant, and decisive work of criticism, as a complete refutation of Warburton's discovery.

‡ It is curious enough to observe, that Warburton himself, acknowledging this to be a paradox, exultingly exclaims, "Which, *like so many others* I have had the ODD FORTUNE to advance, will be seen to be only another name for Truth." This has all the levity of a sophist's language! Hence we must infer that some of the most important subjects could not be understood and defended, but by Warburton's "*odd fortune?*" It was this levity of ideas that raised a suspicion that he was not always sincere. He writes, in a letter, of "living in mere spite, to rub another volume of the Divine Legation in the noses of bigots and zealots." He employs the most ludicrous images, and the coarsest phrases, on the most solemn subjects. In one of his most unlucky paradoxes with Lowth, on the age and style of the writings of Job, he accuses that elegant scholar of deficient discernment; and, in respect to style, as not "distinguishing partridge from horseflesh;" and in quoting some of the poetical passages, of "paying with an old song," and "giving rhyme for reason." Alluding to some one of his adversaries, whom he calls "the weakest, as well as the wickedest, of all mankind," he employs a striking image: "I shall hang him and his fellows, as they do vermin in a warren, and leave them to posterity, to stink and blacken in the wind."

§ Warburton, in this work (the "Doctrine of Grace,") has a curious passage, too long to quote, where he observes, that "The Indian and Asiatic eloquence were esteemed hyperbolic and puerile

consent of the learned had made; an expression borrowed from Quintilian. A plausible and a consolatory argument for the greater part of mankind! It, however, roused the indignation of Leland, the eloquent translator of Demosthenes, and the rhetorical professor at Trinity College, in Dublin, who has nobly defended the cause of classical taste and feeling by profounder principles. His classic anger produced his "Dissertation on the Principles of Human Eloquence;" a volume so much esteemed, that it is still reprinted. Leland refuted the whimsical paradox, yet complimented Warburton, who, "with the spirit and energy of an ancient orator, was writing against eloquence," while he showed that the style of the New Testament was defensible on surer grounds. Hurd, who had fleshed his polished weapon on poor Jortin, and had been received into the arms of the hero under whom he now fought, adventured to cast his javelin at Leland: it was dipped in the cold poison of contempt and petulance. It struck, but did not canker, leaves that were immortal*. Leland, with the native warmth of his soil, could not resist the gratification of a reply; but the nobler part of the triumph was, the assistance he lent to the circulation of Hurd's letter, by reprinting it with his own reply, to accompany a new edition of his "Dissertation on Eloquence."

We now pursue the SECRET PRINCIPLE, operating on lighter topics; when, turning commentator, with the same originality as when an author, his character as a literary adventurer is still more prominent, extorting double senses, discovering the most fantastical allusions, and making men of genius but of confined reading, learned, with all the lumber of his own unwieldy erudition.

When the German professor CROUSAZ published a rigid examen of the doctrines in POPE's Essay on Man, Warburton volunteered a defence of Pope. Some years before, it appears, that Warburton himself, in a literary club at Newark, had produced a dissertation against those very doctrines! where he asserted that "the Essay was collected from the worst passages of the worst authors." This probably occurred at the time he declared that Pope had no genius! BOLINGBROKE really WROTE the *Essay on Man*, which Pope *versified*†. His principles may be often objec-

by the more phlegmatic inhabitants of Rome and Athens: and the Western eloquence, in its turn, frigid or insipid, to the hardy and inflamed imaginations of the East. The same expression, which in one place had the utmost simplicity, had in another the utmost sublime." The jackal, too, echoes the roar of the lion; for the polished Hurd, whose taste was far more decided than Warburton's, was bold enough to add, in his Letter to Leland, "That which is thought supremely *elegant* in one country, passes in another for *finical;* while what in this country is accepted under the idea of *sublimity*, is derided in that other as no better than *bombast*." So unsettled were the *no-taste* of Warburton, and the *prim-taste* of Hurd!

* The Letter to Leland is characterised in the Critical Review for April, 1765, as the work of "a preferment-hunting toad-eater, who, while his patron happened to go out of his depth, tells him that he is treading good ground; but at the same time offers him the use of a cork-jacket to keep him above water."

† In a rough attack on Warburton, respecting Pope's privately printing 1500 copies of the "Patriot King" of Bolingbroke, which I conceive to have been written by Mallet, I find a particular account of the manner in which the "Essay on Man" was written, over which Johnson seems to throw great doubts.

The writer of this angry epistle, in addressing Warburton, says: "If you were as intimate with Mr. Pope as you pretend, you must know the truth of a fact which several others, as well as I, who never had the honour of a personal acquaintance with Lord Bolingbroke or Mr. Pope, have heard. The fact was related to me by a certain senior fellow of one of our Universities, who was very intimate with Mr. Pope. He started some objections, one day, at Mr. Pope's house, to the doctrine contained in the Ethic Epistles: upon which Mr. Pope told him, that he would soon convince him of the truth of it, by laying the argument at large before him; for which purpose he gave him *a large prose manuscript* to peruse, telling him, at the same time, the author's name. From this perusal, whatever other conviction the doctor might receive, he collected at least this: that Mr. Pope had from his friend not only the *doctrine*, but even the *finest and strongest ornaments of his Ethics*. Now, if this fact be true (as I question not but you know it to be so), I believe no man of candour will attribute such merit to Mr. Pope as you would insinuate, for acknowledging the wisdom and the friendship of the man who was his instructor in philosophy; nor consequently that this acknowledgment, and the *dedication of his own system, put into a poetical dress by Mr. Pope*, laid his Lordship under the necessity of never resenting any injury done to him by the poet afterwards. Mr. Pope told no more than literal truth, in calling Lord Bolingbroke his *guide, philosopher, and friend*." The existence of this very manuscript volume was authenticated by Lord Bathurst, in a conversation with Dr. Blair and others, where he said, "he had read

tionable ; but those who only read this fine philosophical poem for its condensed verse, its imagery, and its generous sentiments, will run no danger from a metaphysical system they will not care to comprehend.

But this serves not as an apology for Warburton, who now undertook an elaborate defence of what he had himself condemned, and for which purpose he has most unjustly depressed Crousaz—an able logician, and a writer ardent in the cause of religion. This commentary on the Essay on Man, then, looks much like the work of a sophist, and an adventurer ! Pope, who was now alarmed at the tendency of some of those principles he had so innocently versified, received Warburton as his tutelary genius. A mere poet was soon dazzled by the sorcery of erudition ; and he himself having nothing of that kind of learning, believed Warburton to be the Scaliger of the age, for his gratitude far exceeded his knowledge*. The poet died in this delusion : he consigned his immortal works to the mercy of a ridiculous commentary and a tasteless commentator, whose labours have cost so much pains to subsequent editors to remove. Yet from this moment we date the worldly fortunes of Warburton.—Pope presented him with the entire property of his works ; introduced him to a blind and obedient patron, who bestowed on him a rich wife, by whom he secured a fine mansion ; till, at length, the mitre crowned his last ambition. Such was the large chapter of accidents in Warburton's life !

There appears in Warburton's conduct respecting the editions of the great poets which he afterwards published, something systematic ; he treated the several editors of those very poets, Theobald, Hanmer, and Grey, who were his friends, with the same odd sort of kindness : when he was unknown to the world, he cheerfully contributed to all their labours, and afterwards abused them with the liveliest severity †. It is probable,

the MS. in Lord Bolingbroke's hand-writing, and was at a loss whether most to admire the elegance of Lord Bolingbroke's prose, or the beauty of Mr. Pope's verse."—See the letter of Dr. Blair in Boswell's Life of Johnson.

* Of many instances, the following one is the most curious. When Jarvis published his " Don Quixote," Warburton, who was prompt on whatever subject was started, presented him with " A Dissertation on the Origin of the Books of Chivalry." When it appeared, it threw Pope, their common friend, into raptures. He writes, " I knew you as certainly as the ancients did the gods, by the first pace and the very gait." True enough ! Warburton's strong genius stamped itself on all his works. But neither the translating painter, nor the simple poet, could imagine the heap of absurdities they were admiring ! Whatever Warburton here asserted was false, and whatever he conjectured was erroneous ; but his blunders were quite original.—The good sense and knowledge of Tyrwhitt have demolished the whole edifice, without leaving a single brick standing. The absurd rhapsody has been worth preserving, for the sake of the masterly confutation : no uncommon result of Warburton's literary labours!

It forms the concluding note in Shakespeare's " Love's Labour Lost."

† Of Theobald he was once the companion, and to Sir Thomas Hanmer he offered his notes for his edition. Sir Thomas says he found Warburton's notes " sometimes just, but mostly wild and out of the way." Warburton paid a visit to Sir Thomas for a week, which he conceived was to assist him in perfecting his darling text ; but hints were now dropped by Warburton, that *he* might publish the work corrected, by which a greater sum of money might be got than could be by that plaything of Sir Thomas, which shines in all its splendour in the Dunciad ; but this project did not suit Hanmer, whose life seemed greatly to depend on the magnificent Oxford edition, which " was not to go into the hands of booksellers." On this, Warburton, we are told by Hanmer, " flew into a great rage, and there is an end of the story." With what haughtiness he treats these two friends, for once they were such ! Had the Dey of Algiers been the editor of Shakspeare, he could not have issued his orders more peremptorily for the decapitation of his rivals. Of Theobald and Hanmer he says, " the one was recommended to me as a poor man, the other as a poor critic : and to each of them at different times I communicated a great number of observations, which they managed, as they saw fit, to the relief of their several distresses. Mr. Theobald was naturally turned to industry and labour. What he read he could transcribe ; but as to what he thought, if ever he did think, he could but ill express, so he read on : and by that means got a character of learning, without risking to every observer the imputation of wanting a better talent."—See what it is to enjoy too close an intimacy with a man of wit ! " As for the Oxford Editor, he wanted nothing (alluding to Theobald's want of money) but what he might very well be without, the reputation of a critic," &c. &c.—*Warburton's Preface to Shakspeare.*

His conduct to Dr. Grey, the editor of Hudibras, cannot be accounted for by any known fact. I have already noticed their quarrels in the " Calamities of Authors." Warburton cheerfully supplied Grey with various notes on Hudibras, though he said he

that he had himself projected these editions as a source of profit, but had contributed to the more advanced labours of his rival editors, merely as specimens of his talent, that the public might hereafter be thus prepared for his own more perfect commentaries.

Warburton employed no little art* to excite the public curiosity respecting his future Shakespeare: he liberally presented Dr. BIRCH with his MS. notes, for that great work the General Dictionary, no doubt as the prelude of his after-celebrated edition. Birch was here only a dupe: he escaped, unlike Theobald, Hanmer, and Grey, from being overwhelmed with ridicule and contempt.—When these extraordinary specimens of emendatory and illustrative criticism appeared in the General Dictionary, with general readers they excited all the astonishment of perfect novelty. It must have occurred to them, that no one as yet had understood Shakespeare; and, indeed, that it required no less erudition than that of the new luminary now rising in the critical horizon, to display the amazing erudition of this most recondite poet. Conjectural criticism not only changed the words but the thoughts of the author; perverse interpretations of plain matters. Many a striking passage was wrested into a new meaning: plain words were subtilised to remote conceits; here one line was rejected; and there an interpolation, inspired alone by critical sagacity, pretended to restore a lost one; and finally, a source of knowledge was opened in the notes, on subjects which no other critic suspected could, by any ingenuity, stand connected with Shakespeare's text.

At length the memorable edition appeared: all the world knows its chimeras.† One of its most

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had thought of an edition himself, and they were gratefully acknowledged in Grey's Preface; but behold! shortly afterwards they are saluted by Warburton as "an execrable heap of nonsense;" further, he insulted Dr. Grey for the *number* of his publications! Poor Dr. Grey and his "Coadjutors," as Warburton sneeringly called others of his friends, resented this by "A free and familiar Letter to that great Preserver of Pope and Shakspeare, the Rev. Mr. William Warburton." The doctor insisted, that Warburton had had sufficient share in those very notes, to be considered as one of the "Coadjutors." "I may venture to say, that whoever was the *fool of the company* before he entered (or the *fool of the piece*, in his own diction) he was certainly so after he engaged in that work; for, as Ben Jonson observes 'he that *thinks* himself the *Master-Wit*, is commonly the *Master-Fool*.'"

* Warburton certainly used little intrigues: he trafficked with the obscure Reviews of the times. He was a correspondent in "The Works of the Learned," where the account of his first volume of the Divine Legation, he says, is "a nonsensical piece of stuff;" and when Dr. Doddridge offered to draw up an article for his second, the favour was accepted, and it was sent to the miserable journal, though acknowledged "to be too good for it." In the same journal were published all his specimens of Shakespeare, some years after they had appeared in the General Dictionary, with a high character of these wonderful discoveries.—"The Alliance," when first published, was announced in "The present State of the Republic of Letters," to be the work of a gentleman whose capacity, judgment, and learning deserve some eminent dignity in the Church of England, of which he is now an inferior minister."—One may presume to guess at "the gentleman," a little impatient for promotion, who so much cared whether Warburton was only "now an inferior minister."

These are little arts. Another was, that Warburton sometimes acted Falstaff's part, and ran his sword through the dead! In more instances than one this occurred. Sir Thomas Hanmer was dead when Warburton, then a bishop, ventured to assert that Sir Thomas's letter concerning their intercourse about Shakespeare was "one continued falsehood from beginning to end." The honour and veracity of Hanmer must prevail over the "liveliness" of Warburton, for Hurd lauds his "*lively* preface to his Shakespeare." But the Biog. Brit. bears marks of Warburton's violence, in a cancelled sheet. See the *Index*, art. Hanmer. He did not choose to attack Dr. Middleton in form, during his life-time, but reserved his blow when his antagonist was no more. I find in Cole's MSS. this curious passage:—"It was thought, at Cambridge, that Dr. Middleton and Dr. Warburton did not cordially esteem one another; yet both being keen and thorough sportsmen, they were mutually afraid to engage to each other, for fear of a fall. If that was the case, the bishop judged prudently, however fairly it may be looked upon, to stay till it was out of the power of his adversary to make any reply, before he gave his answer." Warburton only replied to Middleton's Letter from Rome, in his fourth edit. of the D. L. 1765.—When Dyson firmly defended his friend Akenside from the rude attacks of Warburton, it is observed, that he bore them with "prudent patience:" he never replied!

† These critical *extravagansas* are scarcely to be paralleled by "Bentley's Notes on Milton." How Warburton turned "an allegorical mermaid" into "the Queen of Scots;"—showed how Shakespeare, in one word, and with one epithet,

remarkable results was, the production of that work, which annihilated the whimsical labours of Warburton; Edwards's "Canons of Criticism," one of those successful facetious criticisms which, enliven our literary history. Johnson, awed by the learning of Warburton, and warmed by a personal feeling for a great genius who had condescended to encourage his first critical labour, grudgingly bestows a moderated praise on this exquisite satire, which he characterises for "its airy petulance, suitable enough to the levity of the controversy." He compared this attack "to a fly, which may sting and tease a horse, but yet the horse is the nobler animal *." Among the prejudices of criticism, is one which hinders us from relishing a masterly performance, when it ridicules a favourite author; but to us, mere historians, truth will always prevail over literary favouritism. The work of Edwards effected its purpose, that of "laughing down Warburton to his proper rank and character."

Warburton designates himself as "a Critic by profession;" and tells us, he gave this edition "to deter the *unlearned writer* from wantonly trifling with an art he is a stranger to, at the expense of the integrity of the text of established authors." Edwards has placed a N. B. on this declaration:—"A writer may properly be called *unlearned*, who, notwithstanding all his other knowledge, does not understand the subject which he writes upon." But the most dogmatical absurdity was Warburton's declaration, that it was once his design to have given "a body of Canons for criticism, drawn out in form, with a glossary;" and further he informs the reader, that though this has not been done by him, if the reader will take the trouble, he may supply himself, as these Canons of criticism lie scattered in the course of the notes. This idea was seized on with infinite humour by Edwards, who, from these very notes, has framed a set of "Canons of Criticism," as ridiculous as possible; but every one illustrated by authentic examples, drawn from the labours of our new Stagirite †.

"the majestic world," described the *Orbis Romanus*, alluded to the Olympic Games, &c.; yet, after all this discovery, seems rather to allude to a story about Alexander, which Warburton happened to recollect at that moment;—and how he illustrated Octavia's idea of the fatal consequences of a civil war between Cæsar and Antony, who said it would "cleave the world," by the story of Curtius leaping into the chasm;—how he rejected "*allowed*, with absolute power," as not English, and read "*hallowed*," on the authority of the Roman Tribuneship being called *Sacro-sanota Potestas*;—how his emendations often rose from puns; as for instance, when, in Romeo and Juliet, it is said of the Friar, that "the city is much obliged to *him*," our new critic consents to the sound of the word, but not to the spelling, and reads *hymn*; that is, to laud, to praise! These, and more extraordinary instances of perverting ingenuity and abused erudition, would form an uncommon specimen of criticism, which may be justly ridiculed, but which none, except an exuberant genius, could have produced. The most amusing work possible would be a real Warburton's Shakespeare, which would contain not a single thought, and scarcely an expression, of Shakespeare's!

* Had Johnson known as much as we do of Warburton's opinion of his critical powers, it would have gone far to have cured his amiable prejudice in favour of Warburton, who really was a critic without taste, and who considered literature as some do politics, merely as a party-business. I shall give a remarkable instance. When Johnson published his first critical attempt on "Macbeth," he commended the critical talents of Warburton; and Warburton returned the compliment in the preface to his Shakespeare, and distinguishes Johnson as "a man of parts and genius." But, unluckily, Johnson afterwards published his own edition; and, in his editorial capacity, his public duty prevailed over his personal feelings: all this went against Warburton; and the opinions he now formed of Johnson were suddenly those of insolent contempt. In a letter to Hurd, he writes: "Of *this Johnson*, you and I, I believe, think alike!" And to another friend: "The remarks he makes, in every page, on *my Commentaries*, are full of *insolence and malignant reflections*, which, had they not in them *as much folly as malignity*, I should have reason to be offended with." He consoles himself, however, that Johnson's notes, accompanying his own, will enable even "the trifling part of the public" not to mistake in the comparison.—NICHOLS's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. v. p. 595.

And what became of Johnson's noble Preface to Shakespeare? Not a word on that!—Warburton, who himself had written so many spirited ones, perhaps did not like to read one finer than his own,—so he passed it by! He travelled through Egypt, but held his hands before his eyes, at a pyramid!

† Some grave dull men, who did not relish the jests, doubtless the booksellers, who, to buy the *name of Warburton*, had paid down 500*l.* for the edition, loudly complained that Edwards had injured both him and them, by stopping the sale! On this Edwards expresses his surprise, how "a little twelvepenny pamphlet could stop the pro-

At length, when the public had decided on the fate of Warburton's edition, it was confessed, that the editor's design had never been to explain Shakespeare! and that he was even conscious he had frequently imputed to the poet, meanings which he never thought! Our critic's great object was to display his own learning! Warburton wrote for Warburton, and not for Shakespeare! and the literary imposture almost rivals the confessions of Lauder or Psalmanazar!

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gress of eight large octavo volumes;" and apologises, by applying a humorous story to Warburton, for "puffing himself off in the world for what he is not, and now being discovered."—"I am just in the case of a friend of mine, who, going to visit an acquaintance, upon entering his room, met a person going out of it:—'Prythee, Jack,' says he, 'what do you do with that fellow?' 'Why, 'tis Don Pedro di Mondongo, my Spanish master.'—'Spanish master!' replies my friend; 'why, he's an errant Teague; I know the fellow well enough: 'tis Rory Gehagan. He may possibly have been in Spain; but, depend on't, he will sell you the Tipperary brogue for pure Castilian.' Now honest Rory has just the same reason of complaint against this gentleman, as Mr. Warburton has against me, and I suppose abused him as heartily for it; but nevertheless the gentleman did both parties justice."

Some secret history is attached to this publication, so fatal to Warburton's critical character in English literature. This satire, like too many which have sprung out of Literary Quarrels, arose from *personal motives!* When Edwards, in early life, after quitting college, entered the army, he was on a visit at Mr. Allen's, at Bath, whose niece Warburton afterwards married. Literary subjects formed the usual conversation. Warburton, not suspecting the red coat of covering any Greek, showed his accustomed dogmatical superiority. Once, when the controversy was running high, Edwards taking down a Greek author, explained a passage in a manner quite contrary to Warburton. He did unluckily something more—he showed that Warburton's mistake had arisen from having used a French translation!—and all this before Ralph Allen and his niece! The doughty critic was at once silenced, in sullen indignation and mortal hatred. To this circumstance is attributed Edwards's Canons of Criticism, which were followed up by Warburton with incessant attacks; in every new addition of Pope, in the Essay on Criticism, and the Dunciad. Warburton asserts that Edwards is a very dull writer, (witness the pleasantry that carries one through a volume of no small size), that he is a libeller (because he ruined the critical character of Warburton)—and "a libeller (says Warburton, with poignancy), is nothing but a Grub-street critic run to seed."—He compares Edwards's wit and learning to his ancestor Tom Thimble's, in the Rehearsal (because Edwards read Greek authors in their original), and his air of goodnature and politeness, to Caliban's in the Tempest (because he had so keenly written the "Canons of Criticism").—I once saw a great literary curiosity: some *proof-sheets* of the *Dunciad* of Warburton's edition. I observed that some of the bitterest notes were *after-thoughts*, written on those proof-sheets after he had prepared the book for the press—one of these additions was his note on Edwards. Thus Pope's book afforded renewed opportunities for all the personal hostilities of this singular genius!

The same SECRET PRINCIPLE was pursued in his absurd edition of Pope. He formed an unbroken Commentary on the "Essay on Criticism," to show that that admirable collection of precepts had been constructed by a systematical method, which it is well known the poet never designed; and the same instruments of torture were here used as in the "Essay on Man," to reconcile a system of fatalism to the doctrines of revelation*. Warton had to remove the incumbrance of his Commentaries on Pope, while a most laborious

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* In the Richardsoniana, p. 264, the younger Richardson, who was admitted to the intimacy of Pope, and collated the press for him, gives some curious information about Warburton's Commentary, both upon the *Essay on Man* and the *Essay on Criticism*. "Warburton's Discovery of the 'regularity' of Pope's Essay on Criticism and 'the whole scheme' of his Essay on Man, I happen to *know* to be mere absurd refinement in creating conformities; and this from Pope himself, though he thought fit to adopt them afterwards." The genius of Warburton might not have found an invincible difficulty in proving that the Essay on Criticism was in fact an Essay on Man, and the reverse. Pope, before he knew Warburton, always spoke of his Essay on Criticism as "an irregular collection of thoughts thrown together as Horace's Art of Poetry was." As for the Essay on Man, says Richardson, "I *know* that he never dreamed of the scheme he afterwards adopted; but he had taken terror about the clergy, and Warburton himself, at the general alarm of its fatalism and deistical tendency, of which my father and I talked with him frequently at Twickenham, without his appearing to understand it, or ever thinking to alter those passages which we suggested."—This extract is to be valued, for the information is authentic; and it assists us in throwing some light on the subtilty of Warburton's critical impositions.

confederacy zealously performed the same task to relieve Shakespeare. Thus Warburton pursued ONE SECRET PRINCIPLE in all his labours; thus he raised edifices which could not be securely inhabited, and were only impediments in the roadway; and these works are now known by the labours of those who have exerted their skill in laying them in ruins.

Warburton was probably aware, that the SECRET PRINCIPLE which regulated his public opinions might lay him open, at numerous points, to the strokes of ridicule. It is a weapon which every one is willing to use, but which seems to terrify every one when it is pointed against themselves. There is no party or sect which have not employed it in their most serious controversies: the grave part of mankind protest against it, often at the moment they have been directing it for their own purpose. And the inquiry, whether ridicule be a test of truth, is one of the large controversies in our own literature. It was opened by Lord Shaftesbury, and zealously maintained by his school. Akenside, in a note to his celebrated poem, asserts the efficacy of ridicule as a test of truth; Lord Kaimes had just done the same. Warburton levelled his piece at the Lord in the bush-fighting of a note; but came down in the open field with a full discharge of his artillery on the luckless bard*.

Warburton designates Akenside under the sneering appellative of "The Poet," and alluding to his "sublime account" of the use of ridicule, insultingly reminds him of "his Master," Shaftesbury, and of that school which made morality an object of taste, shrewdly hinting that Akenside was "a man of taste;" a new term, as we are to infer from Warburton, for "a Deist;" or, as Akenside had alluded to Spinoza, he might be something worse. The great critic loudly protested against the practice of ridicule; but, in attacking its advocate, he is himself an evidence of its efficacy, by keenly ridiculing "the Poet" and his opinions. Dyson, the patron of Akenside, nobly stepped forwards to rescue his Eagle, panting in the tremendous gripe of the critical Lion. His defence of Akenside is an argumentative piece of criticism on the nature of ridicule, curious, but wanting the graces of the genius who inspired it†.

I shall stop one moment, since it falls into our subject to record this great literary battle on the use of ridicule, which has been fought till both parties, after having shed their ink, divide the field without victory or defeat, and now stand looking on each other.

The advocates for the use of RIDICULE maintain that it is a natural sense or feeling, bestowed on us for wise purposes by the Supreme Being, as are the other feelings of beauty and of sublimity;—the sense of beauty to detect the deformity, as the sense of ridicule the absurdity of an object: and they further maintain, that no real virtues, such as wisdom, honesty, bravery, or generosity, can be ridiculed.

The great Adversary of Ridicule replied, that they did not dare to ridicule the virtues openly; but, by overcharging and distorting them they could laugh at leisure. "Give them other names," he says, "call them but Temerity, Prodigality, Simplicity, &c., and your business is done. Make them ridiculous, and you may go on, in the freedom of wit and humour (as Shaftesbury distinguishes ridicule), till there be never a virtue left to laugh out of countenance."

The ridiculers acknowledge that their favourite art may do mischief, when *dishonest men obtrude circumstances foreign to the object.* But, they justly urge, that the use of reason itself is full as liable to the same objection: grant Spinoza his false premises, and his conclusions will be considered as true. Dyson threw out an ingenious illustration. "It is so equally in the mathematics; where, in reasoning about a circle, if we join along with its real properties others that do not belong to it, our conclusions will certainly be erroneous. Yet who would infer from hence, that *the manner of proof* is defective or fallacious?"

Warburton urged the strongest *case* against the use of ridicule, in that of Socrates and Aristophanes. In his strong and coarse illustration he shows, that "by clapping a fool's coat on the most immaculate virtue, it stuck on Socrates like a San Benito, and at last brought him to his execution: it made the owner resemble his direct opposite; that character he was most unlike. The consequences are well known."

Warburton here adopted the popular notion, that the witty buffoon Aristophanes was the occasion of the death of the philosopher Socrates.

* The postscript to Warburton's Dedication to the Freethinkers, is entirely devoted to Akenside; with this bitter opening, "The Poet was too full of the subject and of himself."

† "An Epistle to the Rev. Mr. Warburton, occasioned by his treatment of the author of 'The Pleasures of the Imagination,' 1744." While Dyson repels Warburton's accusations against "the Poet," he retorts some against the critic himself. Warburton often perplexed a controversy by a subtile change of a word; or by breaking up a sentence; or by contriving some absurdity in the shape of an inference, to get rid of it in a mock triumph. These little weapons against the laws of war, are insidiously practised in the war of words. Warburton never replied.

The defence is skilful on the part of Dyson; and we may easily conceive that on so important a point Akenside had been consulted. I shall give it in his own words:—

"The Socrates of Aristophanes is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn; but it is not the character of Socrates himself. The object was perverted: and the mischief which ensued was owing to the dishonesty of him who persuaded the people that that was the real character of Socrates, not from any error in the faculty of ridicule itself."—Dyson then states the fact, as it concerned Socrates. "The real intention of the contrivers of this ridicule was not so much to mislead the people, by giving them a bad opinion of Socrates, as to sound what was, at the time, the general opinion of him, that from thence they might judge whether it would be safe to bring a direct accusation against him. The most effectual way of making this trial was by ridiculing him; for they knew, if the people saw his character in its true light, they would be displeased with the misrepresentation, and not endure the ridicule. On trial, this appeared: the play met with its deserved fate; and, notwithstanding the exquisiteness of the wit, was absolutely *rejected*. A second attempt succeeded no better; and the abettors of the Poet were so discouraged from pursuing their design against Socrates, that it was not till ABOVE TWENTY YEARS after *the publication of the Play*, that they brought their accusation against him! It was not, therefore, ridicule that did, or could destroy Socrates: he was rather sacrificed for the right use of it himself, against the Sophists, who could not bear the test."

Thus, then, stands the argument.—Warburton, reasoning on the abuses of ridicule, has opened to us all its dangers. Its Advocate concedes that Ridicule, to be a test of Truth, must not impose on us circumstances which are foreign to the object. No object can be ridiculed that is not ridiculous. Should this happen, then the ridicule is false; and as such can be proved, as much as any piece of false reasoning. We may therefore conclude, that ridicule is a taste of congruity and propriety not possessed by every one; a test which separates truth from imposture; a talent, against the exercise of which most men are interested to protest; but which, being founded on the constituent principles of the human mind, is often indulged at the very moment it is decried and complained of.

But we must not leave this great man without some notice of that peculiar style of controversy which he adopted, and which may be distinguished among our LITERARY QUARRELS. He has left his name to a school—a school which the more liberal spirit of the day we live in would not any longer endure. Who has not heard of THE WARBURTONIANS?

That SECRET PRINCIPLE which directed Warburton in all his works, and which we have attempted to pursue, could not of itself have been sufficient to have filled the world with the name of Warburton. Other scholars have published reveries; and they have passed away, after showing themselves for a time, leaving no impression; like those coloured and shifting shadows on a wall, with which children are amused; but Warburton was a literary Revolutionist, who, to maintain a new order of things, exercised all the despotism of a perpetual dictator. The bold unblushing energy which could lay down the most extravagant positions, was maintained by a fierce dogmatic spirit, and by a peculiar style of mordacious contempt and intolerant insolence, beating down his opponents from all quarters, with an animating shout of triumph, to encourage those more serious minds, who, overcome by his genius, were yet often alarmed by the ambiguous tendency of his speculations*.

* The paradoxical title of his great work was evidently designed to attract the unwary. "The Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated—*from the omission of a future state!*" It was long uncertain whether it was "a covert attack on Christianity, instead of a defence of it." I have here no concern with Warburton's character as a polemical theologist; this has been the business of that polished and elegant scholar, Bishop Lowth, who has shown what it is to be in Hebrew literature "a Quack in Commentatorship, and a Mountebank in Criticism." He has fully entered into all the absurdity of Warburton's "ill-starred Dissertation on Job." It is curious to observe, that Warburton, in the wild chase of originality, often too boldly took the bull by the horns, for he often adopted the very reasonings and objections of infidels!—for instance, in arguing on the truth of the Hebrew text, because the words had no points when a living language, he absolutely prefers the Koran for correctness! On this Lowth observes: "You have been urging the same argument that *Spinosa* employed, in order to destroy the authority of the Hebrew Scriptures, and to introduce infidelity and atheism." Lowth shows further, that "this was also done by 'a Society of Gentlemen,' in their 'Sacerdotism Displayed,' said to be written by 'a select committee of the Deists and Freethinkers of Great Britain,' whose author Warburton himself had represented to be 'the forwardest devil of the whole legion.'" Lowth, however, concludes that all the mischief has arisen only from "your lordship's undertaking to treat of a subject with which you appear to

The Warburtonian School was to be supported by the most licentious principles; by dictatorial arrogance*, by gross invective, and by airy sarcasm†; the bitter contempt, which with its many little artifices lowers an adversary in the public opinion, was more peculiarly the talent of one of the aptest scholars, the cool, the keen, the sophistical Hurd. The lowest arts of confede-

be very much unacquainted."—LOWTH's *Letter*, p. 91.

* Lowth remonstrated with Warburton on his "supreme authority:"—"I did not care to protest against the authoritative manner in which you proceeded; or to question *your investiture in the high office of Inquisitor General, and Supreme Judge of the Opinions of the Learned*, which you had long before assumed, and had *exercised with a ferocity and a despotism without example in the Republic of Letters, and hardly to be paralleled among the disciples of Dominic*; exacting their opinions to the standard of your infallibility, and prosecuting with implacable hatred every one that presumed to differ from you."

LOWTH's *Letter to* W. p. 9.

† Warburton had the most cutting way of designating his adversaries, either by the most vehement abuse, or the light petulance that expressed his ineffable contempt. He says to one, "Though your teeth are short, what you want in teeth you have in venom, and know, as all other creatures do, where your strength lies." He thus announces in one of the Prefaces to the Divine Legation the name of the author of a work on "A Future State of Rewards and Punishments," in which were some objections to Warburton's theory:—"I shall, therefore, but do what indeed would be justly reckoned the cruelest of all things, *tell my reader the name of this miserable*; which we find to be J. TILLARD." "Mr. Tillard was first condemned, (says the author of 'Confusion worse confounded,') as a ruffian that stabs a man in the dark, because he did *not* put his name to his book against the Divine Legation; and afterwards condemned as lost to shame, both as a man and a writer, because he *did* put his name to it."—Would not one imagine this person to be one of the lowest of miscreants? He was a man of fortune and literature. Of this person Warburton says in a letter, "This is a man of fortune, and it is well he is so, for I have spoiled his trade as a writer; and as he was very abusive, free-thinking, and anonymous, I have not spared to expose his ignorance and ill faith." But afterwards, having discovered that he was a particular friend to Dr. Oliver, he makes awkward apologies, and declares he would not have *gone so far* had he known this! —He was often so vehement in his abuse, that I find he confessed it himself; for, in preparing a new edition of the Divine Legation, he tells Dr. Birch that he has made "several omissions of passages which were thought *vain*, *insolent*, and *ill-natured*."

It is amusing enough to observe how he designates men as great as himself. When he mentions the learned *Hyde*, he places him "at the head of a rabble of lying Orientalists." When he alludes to *Peters*, a very learned and ingenious clergyman, he passes him by as "The Cornish Critic." A friend of Peters observed, that "he had given Warburton 'a Cornish hug,' of which he might be sore as long as he lived." Dr. *Taylor*, the learned editor of Demosthenes, he selects from "his fellows," that is, other dunces: a delicacy of expression which offended scholars. He threatens Dr. *Stebbing*, who had preserved an anonymous character, "to catch this Eel of Controversy, since he hides his head, by the tail, the only part that sticks out of the mud, more dirty indeed than slippery, and still more weak than dirty, as passing through a trap, where he was forced, at every step, to leave part of his skin, that is, his system." Warburton has often true wit. —With what provoking contempt he calls Sir Thomas Hanmer always "The Oxford Editor!" and in his attack on Akenside, never fails to nickname him, in derision, "The Poet!" I refer the reader to a postscript of his Dedication to the Freethinkers, for a curious specimen of supercilious causticity, in his description of Lord Kaimes as a critic, and Akenside as "The Poet!" Of this pair he tells us, in bitter derision, "they are both men of taste." Hurd imitated his master successfully, by using some qualifying epithet, or giving an adversary some odd nickname, or discreetly dispensing a little mortifying praise. The antagonists he encounters were men sometimes his superiors, and these he calls "sizeable men." Some are styled "insect blasphemers!" The learned Lardner is reduced to "the laborious Dr. Lardner;" and Hume's History is treated with the discreet praise of being "the most readable history we have." He carefully hints to Leland, that "he had never read his works, nor looked into his translations; but what he has *heard* of his writings makes him think favourably of him." Thus, he teases the rhetorical professor, by mentioning the "elegant translation, which, *they say*, you have made of Demosthenes!" And he understands that he is "a scholar, who, *they say*, employs himself in works of learning and taste."

Lowth seems to have discovered this secret art of Warburton; for he says, "You have a set of names always at hand, a kind of infamous list, or black calendar, where every offender is sure to

racy were connived at by all the disciples *, prodigal of praise to themselves, and retentive of it to all others; the world was to be divided into two parts, the *Warburtonians* and the *Anti*.

To establish this new government in the literary world, this great Revolutionist was favoured by Fortune with two important aids; the one was a *Machine*, by which he could wield public opinion; and the other a *Man*, who seemed born to be his minister, or his viceroy.

The *machine* was nothing less than the immortal works of Pope; as soon as Warburton had obtained a royal patent to secure to himself the sole property of Pope's works, the public were compelled, under the disguise of a Commentary on the most classical of our Poets, to be concerned with all his literary quarrels, and have his libels and lampoons perpetually before them; all the foul waters of his anger were deposited here as in a common reservoir †.

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find a niche ready to receive him; nothing so easy as the application, and slight provocation is sufficient."

* Sometimes Warburton left his battles to be fought by subaltern genius; a circumstance to which Lowth, with keen pleasantry, thus alludes: —"Indeed, my lord, I was afterwards much surprised, when, having been with great civility dismissed from your presence, I found *your footman at your door, armed with his master's cane, and falling upon me without mercy*; yourself looking on and approving, and having probably put the weapon with proper orders into his hands. You think, it seems, that I ought to have taken my beating quietly and patiently, in respect to the livery which he wore. I was not of so tame a disposition: I wrested the weapon from him, and broke it. Your lordship, it seems, by an oblique blow, got an unlucky rap on the knuckles; though you may thank yourself for it, you lay the blame on me."—Lowth's *Letter to* W. p. 11.

Warburton and Hurd frequently concerted together on the manner of attack and defence. In one of these letters of Hurd's it is very amusing to read, "*Taylor* is a more creditable dunce than *Webster*—What do you think to do with the Appendix against *Tillard* and *Sykes*? Why might not *Taylor* rank with them," &c. The Warburtonians had also a system of *espionage*. When Dr. Taylor was accused by one of them of having *said* that Warburton was no scholar, the learned Grecian replied, that he did not recollect ever *saying* that Dr. Warburton was no scholar, but that indeed he had always *thought* so.—Hence a tremendous quarrel! Hurd, the Mercury of our Jupiter, cast the first light shaft against the Doctor, then Chancellor of Lincoln, by alluding to the Preface of his work on Civil Law, as "*a certain thing* prefatory to a learned work, intituled, The Elements of Civil Law:" but at length Jove himself rolled his thunder on the hapless Chancellor. The Doctor had said in his work, that "the Roman Emperors persecuted the first Christians, not so much from a dislike of their tenets as from a jealousy of their nocturnal assemblies." Warburton's doctrine was, that "they held nocturnal assemblies because of the persecution of their enemies." One was the fact, and the other the consequence. But the Chancellor of Lincoln was to be outrageously degraded among the dunces! that was the real motive; the "nocturnal assemblies" only the ostensible one. A pamphleteer, in defence of the Chancellor, in reply, thought that in "this literary persecution," it might be dangerous "if Dr. Taylor should be provoked to *prove in print*, what he only *dropped in conversation*."—How innocent was this gentleman of the arts and stratagems of Logomachy, or book-wars! The *proof* would not have altered the cause: Hurd would have disputed it tooth and nail; Warburton was running greater risks, every day of his life, than any he was likely to receive from this flourish in the air. The great purpose was to make the Chancellor of Lincoln the but of his sarcastic pleasantry; and this object was secured by Warburton's forty pages of preface, in which the Chancellor stands to be buffeted, like an ancient quintain, "a mere lifeless block."—All this came upon him for only *thinking* that Warburton was no *scholar!*

† See what I have said at the close of note †, pp. 170-1. In a collection, entitled "Verses occasioned by Mr. Warburton's late edition of Mr. Pope's Works," 1751, are numerous epigrams, parodies, and similes on it. I give one:—

"As on the margin of Thames' silver flood
Stand little *necessary* piles of wood,
So Pope's fair page appears with *notes* disgraced:
Put down the nuisances, ye men of taste!"

Lowth has noticed the use Warburton made of his patent for vending Pope. "I thought you might possibly whip me at the cart's-tail in a note to the 'Divine Legation,' the ordinary place of your literary executions; or *pillory me in the Dunciad*, another engine which, as legal proprietor, you have very ingeniously and judiciously applied to the same purpose; or, perhaps, have ordered me a kind of Bridewell correction, by one of your beadles, in a pamphlet."—Lowth's *Letter to Warburton*, p. 4.

Warburton carried the licentiousness of the pen in all these notes to the Dunciad to a

Fanciful as was the genius of Warburton, it delighted too much in its eccentric motions, and in its own solitary, greatness, amid abstract and recondite topics, to have strongly attracted the public attention, had not a party been formed around him, at the head of which stood the active

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height which can only be paralleled in the gross logomachies of Schioppius, Gronovius, and Scaliger, and the rest of that snarling crew. But his wit exceeded even his grossness. He was accused of not sparing—

"Round-house wit and Wapping choler."

Verses occasioned by Mr. W's. late edition of Pope.

And one of his most furious assailants thus salutes him:—"Whether you are a wrangling Wapping attorney, a pedantic pretender to criticism, an impudent paradoxical priest, or an animal yet stranger, an heterogeneous medley of all three, as your farraginous style seems to confess."—*An Epistle to the Author of a Libel* entitled *"A Letter to the Editor of Bolingbroke's Works, &c."* —*See* NICHOLS, vol. v. p. 651.

I have ascertained that Mallet was the author of this furious Epistle. He would not acknowledge what he dared not deny. Warburton treated Mallet, in this instance, as he often did his superiors—he never replied! The silence seems to have stung this irascible and evil spirit: he returned again to the charge, with another poisoned weapon. His rage produced "A *familiar* Epistle to the most impudent man living, 1749."—The style of this second letter has been characterised as "bad enough to disgrace even gaols and garrets." Its virulence could not well exceed its predecessor. The oddness of its title has made this worthless thing often inquired after. It is merely personal. It is curious to observe Mallet, in this pamphlet, treat Pope as an object of pity, and call him "this poor man." *Orator* Henley took some pains, on the first appearance of this catching title, to assure his friends that it did not refer to *him*. The title proved contagious; which shows the abuse of Warburton was very agreeable. Dr. Z. Grey, under the title of "A Country Curate," published "A free and *familiar* Letter to the great Refiner of Pope and Shakespeare, 1750;" and in 1753, young Cibber tried also at "A *familiar* Epistle to Mr. William Warburton, from Mr. Theophilus Cibber," prefixed to the Life of Barton Booth. Dr. Z. Grey's "freedom and *familiarity*" are designed to show Warburton that he has no wit; but unluckily, the doctor having none himself, his arguments against Warburton's are not decisive. "The *familiarity*" of Mallet is that of a scoundrel, and the *younger* Cibber's that of an idiot: the genius of Warburton was secure. Mallet overcharged his gun with the fellest intentions, but found his piece, in bursting, annihilated himself. The popgun of the *little* Theophilus could never have been heard!

But Warburton's rage was only a part of his *secret principle*; for can anything be more witty than his attack on poor COOPER, the author of "the Life of Socrates?" Having called his book "a late worthless and now forgotten thing, called the Life of Socrates," he adds, "where the head of the author has just made a shift to do the office of a *camera obscura*, and represent things in an inverted order, himself *above*, and Rollin, Voltaire, and every other author of reputation, *below*." When Cooper complained of this, and of some severer language, to Warburton, through a friend, Warburton replied that Cooper had attacked him, and that he had only taken his revenge "with a slight joke." Cooper was weak and vain enough to print a pamphlet, to prove that this was a serious accusation, and no joke; and if it was a joke, he shows it was not a correct one. In fact, Cooper could never comprehend how his head was like a *camera obscura!*—Cooper was of the Shaftesburian school,—philosophers who pride themselves on "the harmony" of their passions, but are too often in discords at a slight disturbance. He equalled the virulence of Warburton, but could not attain to the wit. "I found," says Cooper, "previous to his pretended witticism about the *camera obscura*, such miserable spawn of wretched malice, as nothing but the inflamed brain of a rank monk could conceive, or the oyster-selling maids near London-bridge could utter." One would not suppose all this came from the school of Plato, but rather from the tub of Diogenes. Something must be allowed for poor Cooper, whose "Life of Socrates" had been so positively asserted to be "a late worthless and forgotten thing." It is curious enough to observe Cooper declaring, after this sally, that Warburton "has very unfortunately used the word *impudent* (which epithet Warburton had applied to him), as it naturally reminds every reader, that the pamphlet published about two years ago, addressed 'to the most impudent man living,' was universally acknowledged to be dedicated to our commentator." Warburton had always the Dunciad in his head when a new quarrel was rising, which produced an odd blunder on the side of Edwards, and provoked that wit to be as dull as Cooper. Warburton said, in one of his notes on Edwards, who had entitled himself "a gentleman of Lincoln's-Inn,"—"This gentleman, as he is pleased to call himself, is in reality a gentleman only of the Dunciad, or, to speak him better, in the plain

and subtle Hurd; and amid the gradations of the votive brotherhood, the profound BALGUY, the spirited BROWN, till we descend—

"To his tame jackall, parson TOWNE."
Verses on Warburton's late Edition.

This Warburtonian party reminds one of an old custom among our elder poets, who formed a kind of freemasonry among themselves, by adopting younger poets by the title of their *sons*.—But that was a domestic society of poets; this, a revival of the Jesuitic order instituted by its founder, that—

"By him supported with a proper pride,
They might hold all mankind as fools beside.
Might, like himself, teach each adopted son,
'Gainst all the world, to quote a Warburton *."
CHURCHILL'S *Fragment of a Dedication.*

The character of a literary sycophant was never more perfectly exhibited than in Hurd. A Whig in principle, yet he had all a courtier's arts for Warburton; to him he devoted all his genius, though that, indeed, was moderate; aided him with all his ingenuity, which was exquisite; and lent his cause a certain delicacy of taste and cultivated elegance, which, although too prim and artificial, was a vein of gold running through his mass of erudition; it was Hurd who aided the usurpation of Warburton in the province of criticism, above Aristotle and Longinus†. Hurd

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language of our honest ancestors to such mushrooms, a *gentleman of the last edition*."—Edwards misunderstood the allusion, and sore at the personal attack which followed, of his having "eluded the solicitude of his careful father," considered himself "degraded of his gentility," that it was "a reflection on his birth," and threatened to apply to "Mr. Warburton's Masters of the Bench, for degrading a 'barrister of their house.'"—This afforded a new triumph to Warburton, in a new note, where he explains his meaning of these "mushrooms," whom he meant merely as literary ones; and assures "Fungoso and his friends, who are all gentlemen, that he meant no more than that Edwards had become a gentleman *of the last edition of the Dunciad!*" Edwards and his fungous friends had understood the phrase as applied to new-fangled gentry. One of these wits, in the collection of verses cited above, says to Warburton:—

"This mushroom has made sauce for you.
He's meat; thou'rt poison—plain enough—
If he's a *mushroom*, thou'rt a *puff!*"

Warburton had the full command over the Dunciad, even when Pope was alive; for it was in consequence of Warburton's being refused a degree at Oxford, that the poet, though one had been offered to himself, produced the celebrated lines of "Apollo's Mayor and Aldermen," in the fourth Dunciad. Thus it is that the personal likes and dislikes of witty men come down to posterity, and are often mistaken as just satire, when, after all, they are nothing but LITERARY QUARRELS, seldom founded on truth, and very often complete falsehoods!

* Warburton, indeed, was always looking about for fresh recruits: a circumstance which appears in the curious Memoirs of the late Dr. Heathcote, written by himself. Heathcote, when young, published, anonymously, a pamphlet in the Middletonian controversy. By the desire of Warburton, the bookseller transmitted his compliments to the anonymous author. "I was greatly surprised," says Heathcote, "but soon after perceived, that Warburton's state of authorship being a state of war, *it was his custom to be particularly attentive to all young authors, in hopes of enlisting them into his service.* Warburton was more than civil, when necessary, on these occasions, and would procure such adventurers some slight patronage."—NICHOLS'S *Lit. Anecdotes, vol.* v., *p.* 536.

† We are astonished at the boldness of the minor critic, when even, after the fatal edition of Warburton's Shakespeare, he should still venture, in the life of his great friend, to assert that "this fine edition must ever be highly valued by men of sense and taste; a spirit congenial to that of the author, breathing throughout!"

Is it possible that the man who wrote this should ever have read the "Canons of Criticism?" Yet is it to be supposed that he who took so lively an interest in the literary fortunes of his friend should *not* have read them? The Warburtonians appear to have adopted one of the principles of the Jesuits, in their controversies; which was, to repeat arguments which had been confuted over and over again, to insinuate that they had not been so! But this was not too much to risk, by him who, in his dedication of Horace's Epistle to Augustus, with a Commentary, had hardily and solemnly declared that "Warburton, in his *enlarged view of things*, had not only revived the two models of Aristotle and Longinus, but had rather struck out *a new original plan of criticism*, which should unite the virtues of each of them. This experiment was made on the two greatest of our own poets—Shakespeare and Pope. Still (he adds, addressing Warburton) *you went farther*, by joining to those powers a perfect insight into human nature; and so ennobling the exercise of literary, by the justest moral censure, *you have now, at length, advanced criticism to its full glory.*"

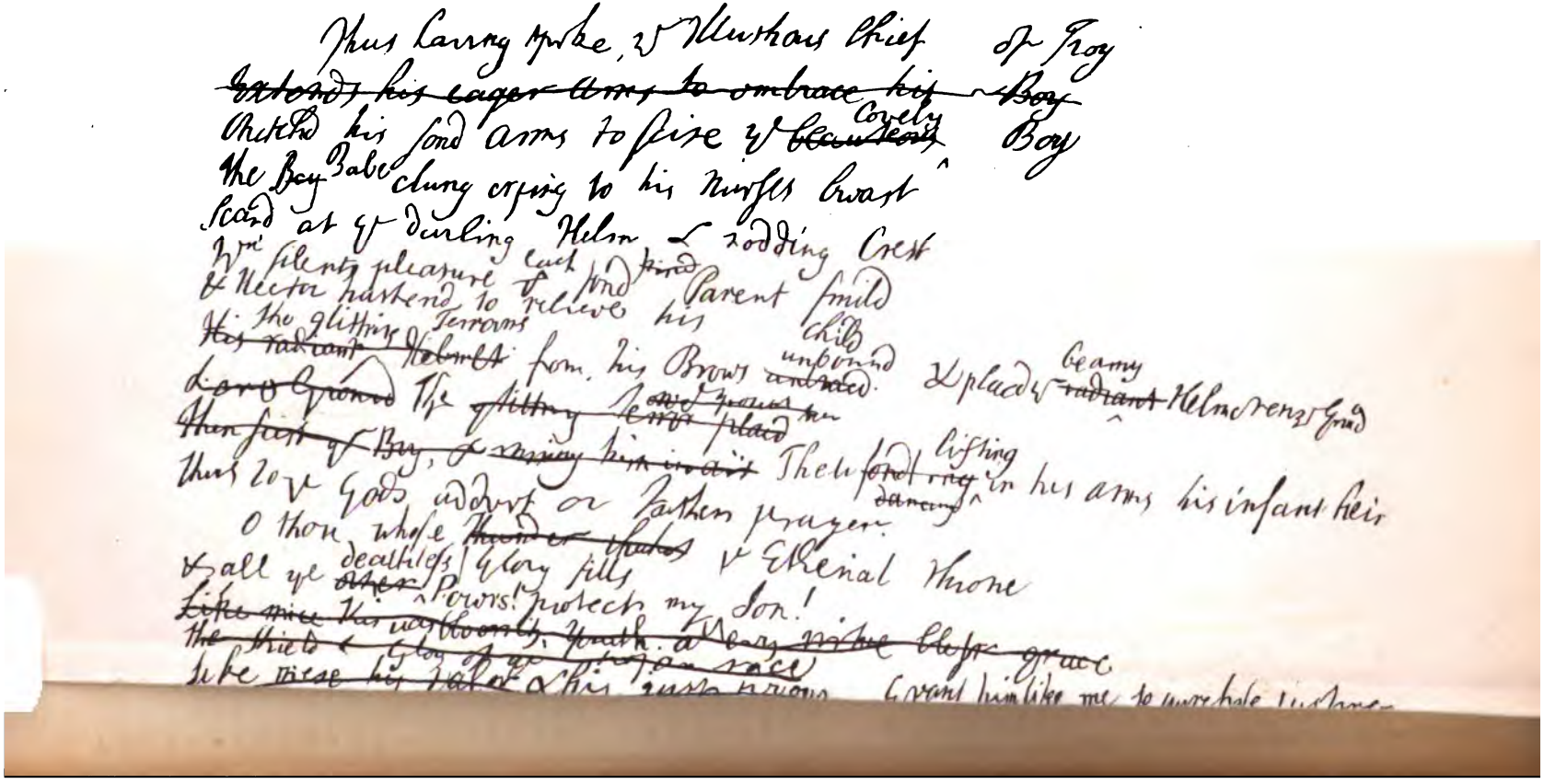
is justly characterised by Warton, in his Spenser, vol. ii. p. 36, as "the *most sensible* and *ingenious* of modern critics."—He was a lover of his studies; and he probably was sincere, when he once told a friend of the literary antiquary Cole, that he would have chosen not to quit the university, for he loved retirement; and on that principle Cowley was his favourite poet, which he afterwards showed, by his singular edition of that poet. He was called, from the cloistered shades, to assume the honourable dignity of a Royal Tutor. Had he devoted his days to literature, he would have still enriched its stores. But he had other more supple and more serviceable qualifications. Most adroit was he in all the archery of controversy: he had the subtlety that can evade the aim of the assailant, and the slender dexterity, substituted for vigour, that struck when least expected. The subaltern genius of Hurd required to be animated by the heroic energy of Warburton; and the careless courage of the chief wanted one who could maintain the unguarded passages he left behind him in his progress.

Such, then, was WARBURTON, and such the quarrels of this great author. He was, through his literary life, an adventurer, guided by that secret principle, which opened an immediate road to fame. By opposing the common sentiments of mankind, he awed and he commanded them; and by giving a new face to all things, he surprised, by the appearances of discoveries. All this, so pleasing to his egotism, was not however fortunate for his ambition. To sustain an authority, which he had usurped; to substitute for the taste he wanted, a curious and dazzling erudition; and to maintain those reckless decisions which so often plunged him into perils, Warburton adopted his *system of Literary Quarrels*. These were the illegitimate means which raised a sudden celebrity; and which genius kept alive, as long as that genius lasted; but Warburton suffered that literary calamity, too protracted a period of human life: he outlived himself and his fame. This great and original mind sacrificed all his genius to that secret principle we have endeavoured to develop—it was a self-immolation!

The learned SELDEN, in the curious little volume of his "Table-Talk," has delivered to posterity a precept for the learned, which they ought to wear, like the Jewish phylacteries, as "a frontlet between their eyes." *No man is the wiser for his Learning: it may administer matter to work in, or objects to work upon; but wit and wisdom are born with a man.*—Sir THOMAS HANMER, who was well acquainted with Warburton, during their correspondence about Shakespeare, often said of him: "The only use he could find in Mr. Warburton was, *starting the game*; he was not to be trusted in *running it down*." A just discrimination! His fervid curiosity was absolutely creative; but his taste and his judgment, perpetually stretched out by his system, could not save him from even inglorious absurdities!

Warburton, it is probable, was not really the character he appears. It mortifies the lovers of genius to discover how a natural character may be thrown into a convulsed unnatural state, by some adopted system: it is this system, which carrying it, as it were, beyond itself, communicates a more than natural, but a self-destroying energy. All then becomes reversed! The arrogant and vituperative Warburton was only such in his assumed character; for, in still domestic life, he was the creature of benevolence, touched by generous passions. But in public life, the artificial, or the acquired character, prevails over the one which nature designed for us; and by that all public men, as well as authors, are usually judged by posterity.

A perpetual intercourse of mutual adulation, animated the Sovereign and his viceroy, and, by mutual support, each obtained the same reward: two mitres crowned the greater and the minor critic. This intercourse was humorously detected by the lively author of "Confusion worse confounded."—"When the late Duke of R. (says he) kept wild beasts, it was a common diversion to make two of his bears drunk (not metaphorically with flattery, but literally with strong ale), and then daub them over with honey. It was excellent sport to see how lovingly (like a couple of critics) they would lick and claw one another." It is almost amazing to observe how Hurd, who naturally was of the most frigid temperament, and the most subdued feelings, warmed, heated, and blazed, in the progressive stages, "of that pageantry of praise spread over the Rev. Mr. Warburton, when the latter was advancing fast towards a Bishoprick," to use the words of Dr. Parr, a sagacious observer of man. However, notwithstanding the despotic mandates of our Pichrocole and his dapper minister, there were who did not fear to meet the greater bear, of the two so facetiously described above. And the author of "Confusion worse confounded" tells a familiar story, which will enliven the history of our great critic.—"One of the bears mentioned above happened to get loose, and was running along the street in which a tinker was gravely walking. The people all cried 'Tinker! tinker! beware of the bear!'—Upon this Magnano faced about, with great composure; and raising his staff, knocked down Bruin; then setting his arms a-kimbo, walked off very sedately; only saying—'Let the bear beware of the tinker'—which is now become a proverb in those parts."—*Confusion worse confounded*, p. 75.



POPE,

AND HIS MISCELLANEOUS QUARRELS.

adopted a system of literary politics—collected, with extraordinary care, everything relative to his Quarrels ttician ever studied to obtain his purposes by more oblique directions and intricate stratagems—some of his res—his systematic hostility not practised with impunity—his claim to his own Works contested—CIBBER's description of POPE's feelings, and WELSTED's elegant satire on his genius—DENNIS's account of POPE's tion to him—his political prudence further discovered in the Collection of all the Pieces relative to the , in which he employed SAVAGE—the THEOBALDIANS and the POPEIANS; an attack by a Theobaldian—The ingeniously defended, for the grossness of its imagery, and its reproach of the poverty of the authors, d by POPE himself, with some curious specimens of literary personalities—the Literary Quarrel between HILL and POPE distinguished for its romantic cast—a Narrative of the extraordinary transactions respecting lication of POPE's Letters; an example of Stratagem and Conspiracy, illustrative of his character.

POPE has proudly perpetuated the history of his rary Quarrels; and he appears to have been ng those authors, surely not forming the ority, who have delighted in, or have not been se to provoke, hostility. He has registered the s of every book, even to a single paper, or a y of verses, in which their authors had com- ted treason against his poetical sovereignty*. His ambition seemed gratified in heaping these trophies to his genius, while his meaner passions could compile one of the most voluminous of the

* Pope collected these numerous literary libels ith extraordinary care. He had them bound in lumes of all sizes; and a range of twelves, tavos, quartos, and folios, were marshalled in portentous order on his shelves. He wrote the names of the writers, with remarks on these *Anonymiana*. He prefixed to them this motto, from Job: "Behold, my desire is, that mine adversary had written a book: surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me." xxxi. 35. Ruffhead, who wrote Pope's Life under the eye of Warburton, who revised every sheet of the volume, and suffered this mere lawyer and singularly wretched critic to write on, with far inferior taste to his own—offered "the entire collection to any public library or museum, whose search is after *curiosities*, and may be desirous of enriching their common treasure with it: it will be freely at the service of that which asks first." Did no one accept the invitation? As this was written in 1769, it is evidently pointed towards the British Museum; but there I have not heard of it. This collection must have contained much of the Secret Memoirs of Grub-street: it was always a fountain whence those "waters of bitterness," the notes in the Dunciad, were readily supplied. It would be curious to discover by what stratagem Pope obtained all that secret intelligence about his Dunces, with which he has burthened posterity, for his own particular gratification. Arbuthnot, it is said, wrote some notes merely literary; but Savage, and still humbler agents, served him as his *Espions de Police*. He pensioned Savage to his last day, and never deserted him. In the account of "the phantom Moore," Scriblerus appeals to Savage to authenticate some story. One curious instance of the fruits of Savage's researches in this way he has himself preserved, in his memoirs of "An Author to be Let, by Iscariot Hackney." This portrait of "a perfect Town-Author" is not deficient in spirit: the hero was one Roome, a man only celebrated in the Dunciad for his "funereal frown." But it is uncertain whether this fellow had really so dismal a countenance; for the epithet was borrowed from his profession, being the son of an undertaker! Such is the nature of some satire! Dr. Warton is astonished, or mortified, for he knew not which, to see the pains and patience of Pope and his friends in compiling the Notes to the Dunciad, to trace out the lives and works of such paltry and

scandalous chronicles of literature. We are mortified on discovering so fine a genius in the text, humbling itself through all the depravity of a commentary full of spleen, and not without the fictions of satire. The unhappy influence his *Literary Quarrels* had on this great poet's life remains to be traced. He adopted a system of literary politics, abounding with stratagems, conspiracies, manœuvres, and factions.

Pope's literary quarrels were the wars of his poetical ambition, more perhaps than of the petulance and strong irritability of his character. They were some of the artifices he adopted, from the peculiarity of his situation.

Thrown out of the active classes of society, from a variety of causes, sufficiently known *, concentrating his passions into a solitary one, his retired life was passed in the contemplation of his own literary greatness. Reviewing the past, and anticipating the future, he felt he was creating a new era in our Literature, an event which does not always occur in a century; but eager to secure present celebrity, with the victory obtained in the open field, he combined the intrigues of the cabinet: thus, while he was exerting great means, he practised little artifices. No politician studied to obtain his purposes by more oblique directions, or with more intricate stratagems; and Pope was at once the lion and the fox of Machiavel. A book might be written on the Stratagems of Literature, as Frontinus has composed one on War, and among its subtilest heroes we might place this great poet.

To keep his name alive before the public, was one of his early plans. When he published his "Essay on Criticism," anonymously, the young and impatient poet was mortified with the inertion of public curiosity: he was almost in despair †. Twice, perhaps oftener, Pope attacked Pope ‡; and

forgotten scribblers. "It is like walking through the darkest alleys in the dirtiest part of St. Giles's." Very true! But may we not be allowed to detect the vanities of human nature at St. Giles's as well as St. James's? Authors, however obscure, are always an amusing race to authors. The greatest find their own passions in the least, though distorted, or cramped in too small a compass.

It is doubtless from Pope's great anxiety for his own literary celebrity that we have been furnished with so complete a knowledge of the grotesque groups in the Dunciad. "Give me a shilling," said Swift facetiously, "and I will insure you that posterity shall never know one single enemy, excepting those whose memory you have preserved." A very useful hint for a man of genius to leave his wretched assailants to dissolve away in their own weakness. But Pope, having written a Dunciad, by accompanying it with a commentary, took the only method to interest posterity. He felt that Boileau's satires on bad authors are liked only in the degree the objects alluded to are known. But he loved too much the subject for its own sake. He abused the powers genius had conferred on him, as other imperial sovereigns have done. It is said that he kept the whole kingdom in awe of him. In "the frenzy and prodigality of vanity," he exclaimed—

"——— Yes, I am proud to see
Men, not afraid of God, afraid of me!"

Tacitus Gordon said of him, that Pope seemed to persuade the nation that all genius and ability were confined to him and his friends.

* Pope, in his energetic Letter to Lord Hervey, that "master-piece of invective," says Warton, which Tyers tells us he kept long back from publishing, at the desire of Queen Caroline, who was fearful her counsellor would become insignificant in the public esteem, and at last in her own, such was the power his genius exercised;—has pointed out one of these causes. It describes himself as "a private person under penal laws, and many other disadvantages, not for want of honesty or conscience; yet it is by these alone I have hitherto lived *excluded from all posts of profit or trust*. I can interfere with the views of no man."

† The first publisher of the Essay on Criticism must have been a Mr. Lewis, a Catholic bookseller in Covent-garden; for, from a descendant of this Lewis, I heard that Pope, after publication, came every day, persecuting with anxious inquiries the cold impenetrable bookseller, who, as the poem lay uncalled for, saw nothing but vexatious importunities in a troublesome youth. One day, Pope, after nearly a month's publication, entered, and in despair tied up a number of the poems, which he addressed to several who had a reputation in town, as judges of poetry. The scheme succeeded, and the poem, having reached its proper circle, soon got into request.

‡ He was the author of "The Key to the Lock," written to show that "The Rape of the Lock" was a political poem, designed to ridicule the Barrier Treaty. Its innocent extravagance could only have been designed to increase attention to a work, which hardly required any such artifice. In the same spirit he composed the Guardian, in which Phillips's Pastorals were insidiously preferred to his own. Pope sent this ironical, panegyrical criticism on Phillips anonymously to the Guardian, and Steele not perceiving the drift, hesitated to publish it, till Pope advised it. Addison detected it. I doubt whether we have

he frequently concealed himself under the names of others, for some particular design. Not to point out his dark familiar Scriblerus, always at hand for all purposes, he made use of the names of several of his friends. When he employed SAVAGE in "a collection of all the pieces, in verse and prose, published on occasion of the Dunciad," he subscribed his name to an admirable dedication to Lord Middlesex, where he minutely relates the whole history of the Dunciad, "and the weekly clubs held to consult of hostilities against the author; and, for an express introduction to that Work, he used the name of Cleland, to which is added a note, expressing surprise that the world did not believe that Cleland was the writer! Wanting a pretext for the publication of his letters, he delighted CURLL by conveying to him some printed surreptitious copies, who soon discovered, that it was but a fairy treasure, which he could not grasp; and Pope, in his own defence, had soon ready the authentic edition *. Some lady observed that Pope "hardly drank tea without a stratagem!" The female genius easily detects its own peculiar faculty, when it is exercised with inferior delicacy.

But his systematic hostility did not proceed with equal impunity: in this perpetual war with dulness, he discovered that every one he called a dunce was not so; nor did he find the dunces themselves less inconvenient to him; for many successfully substituted, for their deficiencies in better qualities, the lie, that lasts long enough to vex a man; and the insolence, that does not fear him: they attacked him at all points, and not always in the spirit of legitimate warfare. They filled up his asterisks, and accused him of treason. They asserted that the panegyrical verses, prefixed to his works (an obsolete mode of recommendation, which Pope condescended to practise), were his own composition, and to which he had affixed the names of some dead or some unknown writers. They published lists of all whom Pope had attacked; placing at the head, "God Almighty; the king;" descending to the "lords and gentlemen †." A few suspected his skill in Greek; but every hound yelped in the halloo against his Homer ‡. Yet the more extraordinary circumstance of all satirists. Atterbury, after reading the portrait of Atticus, advised him to proceed in a way which his genius had pointed out; but Arbuthnot, with his dying breath, conjured him "to reform, and not to chastise;" that is, not to spare the vice, but the person. It is said, Pope answered, that, to correct the world with due effect, they become inseparable; and that, deciding by his own experience, he was justified in this opinion. Perhaps, at first, he himself wavered; but he strikes bolder as he gathers strength. The two first editions of the Dunciad, now before me, could hardly be intelligible: they exhibit lines after lines gaping with an hiatus, or obscured with initial letters: in subsequent editions, the names stole into their places. We are told, that the personalities in his Satires quickened the sale: the portraits of Sporus, Bufo, Clodius, Timon, and Atossa, were purchased by everybody; but when he once declared, respecting the *characters* of one of his best satires, that no real persons were intended, it checked public curiosity, which was felt in the sale of that edition. Personality in his satires, no doubt, accorded with the temper and the talent of Pope; and the malice of mankind afforded him all the conviction necessary to indulge it. Yet Young could depend solely on abstract characters and pure wit; and I believe that his "Love of Fame" was a series of admirable satires, which did not obtain less popularity than Pope's. Cartwright, one of the poetical sons of Ben Jonson, describes, by a beautiful and original image, the office of the satirist, though he praises Jonson for exercising a virtue he did not always practise; as Swift celebrates Pope with the same truth, when he sings:—

"Yet malice never was his aim;
He lash'd the vice, but spared the name."

Cartwright's lines are:—

"————'tis thy skill
To strike the vice, but spare the person still;
As he who, when he saw the serpent wreath'd
About his sleeping son, and as he breathed,
Drink in his soul, did so the shot contrive,
To kill the beast, but keep the child alive."

‡ Cooke, the translator of Hesiod, published a letter in Mist's Journal, insisting that Pope had *mistaken the whole character of Thersites*, from ignorance of the language. I regret I have not drawn some notes from that essay. The subject might be made curious by a good Greek scholar, if Pope has really erred in the degree Cooke asserts. Theobald, who seems to have been a more classical scholar than has been allowed, besides some ver-

discovered all the *supercheries* of this kind. After writing the finest works of genius, he was busily employed in attracting the public attention to them. In the antithesis of his character, he was so great and so little! But he knew mankind! and present fame was the great business of his life.

* The narrative of this dark transaction, which seems to have been imperfectly known to Johnson, being too copious for a note, will be found at the close of this article.

† Pope is, perhaps, the finest *character-painter*

stance was, their hardy disputes with Pope respecting his claim to his own works, and the difficulty he more than once found to establish his rights. Sometimes they divided public opinion by even indicating the real authors; and witnesses, from White's and St. James's, were ready to be produced. Among these literary coteries, several of Pope's productions, in their anonymous, and even in their MS. state, had been appropriated by several pseudo authors; and when Pope called for restitution, he seemed to be claiming nothing less than their lives. One of these gentlemen had enjoyed a very fair reputation for more than two years on the "Memoirs of a Parish-Clerk;" another, on "The Messiah;" and there were many other vague claims. All this was vexatious; but not so much as the ridiculous attitude in which Pope was sometimes placed by his enraged adversaries *. He must have found himself in a more perilous situation, when he hired a brawny champion, or borrowed the generous courage of some military friend †. To all these troubles we may add, that Pope has called down on himself more lasting vengeance; and the good sense of Theobald, the furious, but often acute remarks of Dennis; the good-humoured, yet keen remonstrance of Cibber; the silver shaft, tipped with venom, sent from the injured but revengeful Lady Mary; and many a random-shot, that often struck him, inflicted on him many a sleepless night ‡.

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sions from the Greek tragic bards, commenced a translation of the Odyssey as soon as Pope's Iliad appeared.

* In one of these situations, Pope issued a very grave, but very ludicrous, advertisement. They had the impudence to publish an account of Pope having been flagellated by two gentlemen in Ham Walks, during his evening promenade. This was avenging Dennis for what he had undergone from the narrative of his madness. In "The Memoirs of Grub-street," vol. i. p. 96, this tingling narrative appears to have been the ingenious forgery of Lady Mary! On this occasion, Pope thought it necessary to publish the following advertisement in the Daily Post, June 14, 1728:—

"Whereas, there has been a scandalous paper cried aloud about the streets, under the title of 'A Pop upon Pope,' insinuating that I was whipped in Ham Walks, on Thursday last:—This is to give notice, that I did not stir out of my house at Twickenham on that day; and the same is a malicious and ill-grounded report.—A. P."

It seems that Phillips hung up a birchen-rod at Button's. Pope, in one of his letters, congratulates himself that he never attempted to use it.

† According to the scandalous chronicle of the day, Pope, shortly after the publication of the Dunciad, had a tall Irishman to attend him. Colonel Duckett threatened to cane him, for a licentious stroke aimed at him, which Pope recanted. Thomas Bentley, nephew to the doctor, for the treatment his uncle had received, sent Pope a challenge. The modern, like the ancient, Horace, was of a nature liable to panic at such critical moments. Pope consulted some military friends, who declared that his *person* ought to protect him from any such redundance of valour as was thus formally required: however, one of them accepted the challenge for him, and gave Bentley the option either of fighting or apologising; who, on this occasion, proved, what is usual, that the easiest of the two was the quickest done.

‡ I shall preserve one specimen, so classically elegant, that Pope himself might have composed it. It is from the pen of that Leonard Welsted whose Aganippe Pope has so shamefully characterised—

"Flow, Welsted, flow, like thine inspirer, beer!"

Can the reader credit, after this, that Welsted, who was clerk in ordinary at the Ordnance Office, was a man of family and independence, of elegant manners and a fine fancy, but who considered poetry only as a passing amusement? He has, however, left behind, amid the careless productions of his muse, some passages wrought up with equal felicity and power. There are several original poetical views of nature scattered in his works, which have been collected by Mr. Nichols, that would admit of a comparison with some of established fame.

Welsted imagined that the spirit of English poetry was on its decline in the age of Pope, and allegorises the state of our poetry in a most ingenious comparison. The picture is exquisitely wrought, like an ancient gem: one might imagine Anacreon was turned critic:—

"A flask I rear'd whose sluice began to fail,
And told, from Phædrus, this facetious tale:—
Sabina, very old and very dry,
Chanced, on a time, an EMPTY FLASK to spy:
The flask but lately had been thrown aside,
With the rich grape of Tuscan vineyards dyed;
But lately, gushing from the slender spout,
Its life, in purple streams, had issued out.
The costly flavour still to sense remain'd,
And still its sides the violet colour stain'd:
A sight so sweet taught wrinkled age to smile;
Pleased, she imbibes the generous fumes awhile,
Then, downwards turn'd, the vessel gently props,
And drains with patient care the lucid drops:
O balmy spirit of Etruria's vine!
O fragrant flask, she said, too lately mine!

The younger Richardson has recorded the personal sufferings of Pope, when, one day, in taking up Cibber's letter, while his face was writhing with agony, he feebly declared that "these things were as good as hartshorn to him;" but he appeared, at that moment, rather to want a little. And it is probably true, what Cibber facetiously says of Pope, in his second letter: "Everybody tells me that I have made you as uneasy as a rat in a hot kettle, for a twelvemonth together."

Pope was pursued through life by the insatiable vengeance of Dennis. The young poet, who had got introduced to him, among his first literary acquaintances, could not fail, when the occasion presented itself, of ridiculing this uncouth son of Aristotle. The blow was given in the character of Appius, in the Art of Criticism; and it is known Appius was instantaneously recognised by the fierce shriek of the agonised critic himself. From that moment Dennis resolved to write down every work of Pope's. How dangerous to offend certain tempers, verging on madness*! Dennis, too, called on every one to join him in the common cause; and once he retaliated on Pope in his own way. Accused by Pope of being the writer of an account of himself, in Jacob's Lives of the Poets, Dennis procured a letter from Jacob, which he published, and in which it appears that Pope's own character in this collection, if not written by him, was by him very carefully corrected on the proof-sheet; so that he stood in the same ridiculous attitude into which he had thrown Dennis, as his own trumpeter.—Dennis, whose brutal energy remained unsubdued, was a rhinoceros of a critic, shelled up against the arrows of wit. This monster of criticism awed the poet; and Dennis proved to be a Python, whom the golden shaft of Apollo could not pierce.

The political prudence of Pope was further discovered in the "Collection of all the Pieces relative to the Dunciad," on which he employed Savage: these exemplified the justness of the satire, or defended it from all attacks. The precursor of the "Dunciad" was a single chapter in "The Bathos, or the Art of Sinking in Poetry;" where the humorous satirist discovers an analogy between flying-fishes, parrots, tortoises, &c. and certain writers, whose names are designated by initial letters. In this unlucky alphabet of dunces, not one of them but was applied to some writer of the day; and the loud clamours these excited could not be appeased by the simplicity of our poet's declaration, that the letters were placed at random: and while his oil could not smooth so turbulent a sea, every one swore to the flying-fish or the tortoise, as he had described them. It was still more serious when the "Dunciad" appeared. Of that class of authors who depended for a wretched existence on their wages, several were completely ruined, for no purchasers were to be found for the works of some authors, after they had been inscribed in the chronicle of our provoking and inimitable satirist†.

If such delights, THOUGH EMPTY, *thou canst yield,*
What wondrous raptures hadst thou given, if fill'd!"

Palæmon to Cælia at Bath, or the Triumvirate.

"The empty flask" only retaining "the costly flavour," was the verse of Pope.

* Dennis tells the whole story. "At his first coming to town, he was importunate with Mr. Cromwell to introduce him to me. The recommendation engaged me to be about thrice in company with him; after which I went to the country, till I found myself most insolently attacked in his very superficial Essay on Criticism, by which he endeavoured to destroy the reputation of a man who had published pieces of criticism, and to set up his own. I was moved with indignation to that degree, that I immediately writ remarks on that Essay. I also writ upon part of his translation of Homer, his Windsor Forest, and his infamous Temple of Fame." In the same pamphlet he says:—"Pope writ his Windsor Forest in envy of Sir John Denham's Cooper's Hill; his infamous Temple of Fame, in envy of Chaucer's poem upon the same subject; his Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, in envy of Dryden's Feast of Alexander."—In reproaching Pope with his peculiar rhythm, that monotonous excellence, which soon became mechanical, he has an odd attempt at a pun:—"Boileau's Pegasus has all his paces; the Pegasus of Pope, like a *Kentish post-horse*, is always upon the *Canterbury*."—*Remarks upon several passages in the Preliminaries to the Dunciad*, 1729.

† Two parties arose in the literary republic, the *Theobaldians* and the *Popeians*. The Grub-street Journal, a kind of literary gazette of some campaigns of the time, records the skirmishes with tolerable neutrality, though with a strong leaning in favour of the prevailing genius.

The *Popeians* did not always do honour to their great leader; and the *Theobaldians* proved themselves, at times, worthy of being engaged, had fate so ordered it, in the army of their renowned enemy. When Young published his "Two Epistles to Pope, on the Authors of the Age," there appeared "One Epistle to Mr. A. Pope, in answer to two of Dr. Young's." On this, a Popeian defends his master from some extravagant accusations, in "The Grub-street Memoirs." He insists, as his

It is in this Collection by Savage I find the writer's admirable satire on the class of literary prostitutes. It is entitled "An Author to be let, by Iscariot Hackney." It has been ably commended by Johnson in his Life of Savage, and on his recommendation, Thomas Davies inserted it in his Collection of Fugitive Pieces; but such is the careless curiosity of modern re-publishers, that often, in preserving a decayed body, they are apt to drop a limb: this was the case with Davies; for he has dropped the preface, far more exquisite than the work itself. A morsel of such poignant relish betrays the hand of the master, who snatched the pen for a moment.

This preface defends Pope from the two great objections justly raised at the time against the "Dunciad:" one is, the grossness and filthiness of its imagery; and the other, its reproachful allusions to the poverty of the authors.

The *indelicacies* of the "Dunciad" are thus wittily apologised for:—

"They are suitable to the subject; a subject composed, for the most part, of authors whose writings are the refuse of wit, and who in life are the very excrement of Nature. Mr. Pope has, too, used dung; but he disposes that dung in such a manner that it becomes rich manure, from which he raises a variety of fine flowers. He deals in rags; but like an artist, who commits them to a paper-mill, and brings them out useful sheets. The chemist extracts a fine cordial from the most nauseous of all dung; and Mr. Pope has drawn a sweet poetical spirit from the most offensive and unpoetical objects of the creation—unpoetical, though eternal writers of poetry."

The reflections on the *poverty* of its heroes are thus ingeniously defended:—"Poverty, not proceeding from folly, but which may be owing to virtue, sets a man in an amiable light; but when our wants are of our own seeking, and prove the motive of every ill action (for the poverty of bad authors has always a bad heart for its companion), is it not a vice, and properly the subject of satire?" The preface then proceeds to show how "all these *said writers* might have been *good mechanics*." He illustrates his principles with a most ungracious account of several of his contemporaries. I shall give a specimen of what I consider as the polished sarcasm and caustic humour of Pope, on some favourite subjects.

"Mr. Thomas *Cooke*.—His enemies confess him not without merit. To do the man justice, he might have made a tolerable figure as a *Tailor*. 'Twere too presumptuous to affirm he could have been a *master* in any profession; but, dull as I allow him, he would not have been despicable for a third or a fourth hand journeyman. Then had his wants have been avoided; for, he would at least have learned to *cut his coat according to his cloth*.

"Why would not Mr. *Theobald* continue an attorney? Is not *Word-catching* more serviceable in splitting a cause, than explaining a fine poet?

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first principle, that all accusations against a man's character, without an attester, are presumed to be slanders and lies, and in this case every gentleman, though "Knight of the Bathos," is merely a liar and scoundrel.

"You assure us he is not only a bad poet, but a stealer from bad poets: if so, you have just cause to complain of invasion of property. You assure us he is not even a versifier, but steals the *sound* of his verses; now, to *steal a sound* is as ingenious as to *paint an echo*. You cannot bear *gentlemen* should be treated as vermin and reptiles; now, to be impartial, you were compared to *flying-fishes*, *didappers*, *tortoises*, and *parrots*, &c. not vermin, but curious and beautiful creatures"—alluding to the abuse, in this Epistle, on such authors as Atterbury, Arbuthnot, Swift, the Duke of Buckingham, &c. The Popeian concludes:—

"After all, *your poem*, to comfort you, is more innocent than the *Dunciad*; for in the one there's no man abused, but is very well pleased to be abused in such company; whereas, in the other, there's no man so much as named, but is extremely affronted to be ranked with such people as style each other the *dullest of men*."

The publication of the Dunciad, however, drove the *Theobaldians* out of the field. Guerillas, such as the "One Epistle," sometimes appeared, but their heroes struck and skulked away. A *Theobaldian*, in an Epigram, compared the Dunciad of Pope to the offspring of the celebrated Pope Joan. The neatness of his wit is hardly blunted by a pun. He who talks of Pope's "stealing a sound," seems to have practised that invisible art himself, for the verse is musical as Pope's.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE DUNCIAD.

"With rueful eyes thou view'st thy wretched race,
The child of guilt, and destined to disgrace.
Thus when famed Joan usurp'd the Pontiff's chair,
With terror she beheld her new-born heir:
Ill-starr'd, ill-favour'd into birth it came;
In vice begotten, and brought forth with shame!
In vain it breathes, a lewd abandon'd hope!
And calls in vain, the unhallow'd father—Pope!"

The answers to this Epigram by the Popeians are too gross. The "One Epistle" is attributed to James Moore Smyth, in alliance with Welsted, and other unfortunate heroes.

"When *Mrs. Haywood* ceased to be a strolling-actress, why might not the lady (though once a theatrical queen) have subsisted by turning *washerwoman*? Has not the fall of greatness been a frequent distress in all ages? She might have caught a beautiful bubble, as it arose from the suds of her tub, blown it in air, seen it glitter, and then break! Even in this low condition, she had played with a bubble; and what more is the vanity of human greatness?

"Had it not been an honester and more decent livelihood for Mr. *Norton* (Daniel De Foe's son of love by a lady who vended oysters) to have dealt in a *fish-market*, than to be dealing out the dialects of Billingsgate in the Flying-post?

"Had it not been more laudable for Mr. *Reome*, the son of an *undertaker*, to have borne a link and a mourning-staff, in the long procession of a funeral—or even been more decent in him to have sung psalms, according to education, in an Anabaptist meeting, than to have been altering the *Jovial Crew, or Merry Beggars*, into a *wicked* imitation of the *Beggar's Opera*?"

This satire seems too exquisite for the touch of Savage, and is quite in the spirit of the author of the Dunciad. There is, in Ruffhead's Life of Pope, a work to which Warburton contributed all his care, a passage which could only have been written by Warburton. The strength and coarseness of the imagery could never have been produced by the dull and feeble intellect of Ruffhead: it is the opinion, therefore, of Warburton himself, on the Dunciad. "The *good purpose* intended by this satire was, to the *herd* in general, of less efficacy than our author hoped; for *scribblers* have not the common sense of *other vermin*, who usually abstain from mischief, when they see any of their kind *gibbetted* or *nailed up*, as terrible examples." —Warburton employed the same strong image in one of his threats.—See p. 166, note.

One of Pope's Literary Quarrels must be distinguished for its romantic cast.

In the Treatise on the *Bathos*, the initial letters of the bad writers occasioned many heart-burns; and, among others, Aaron Hill suspected he was marked out by the letters A. H. This gave rise to a large correspondence between Hill and Pope. Hill, who was a very amiable man, was infinitely too susceptible of criticism; and Pope, who seems to have had a personal regard for him, injured those nice feelings as little as possible. Hill had published a panegyrical poem on Peter the Great, under the title of "The Northern Star;" and the bookseller had conveyed to him a criticism of Pope's, of which Hill publicly acknowledged he mistook the meaning. When the Treatise of "The Bathos" appeared, Pope insisted he had again mistaken the initials A. H.—Hill gently attacked Pope in "a paper of very pretty verses," as Pope calls them. When the Dunciad appeared, Hill is said "to have published pieces, in his youth, bordering upon the bombast." This was as light a stroke as could be inflicted; and which Pope, with great good-humour, tells Hill, might be equally applied to himself; for he always acknowledged, that when a boy, he had written an Epic poem of that description; would often quote absurd verses from it, for the diversion of his friends; and actually inserted some of the most extravagant ones in the very Treatise on "The Bathos." Poor Hill, however, was of the most sickly delicacy, and produced "The Caveat," another gentle rebuke, where Pope is represented as "sneakingly to approve, and want the worth to cherish or befriend men of merit." In the course of this correspondence, Hill seems to have projected the utmost stretch of his innocent malice; for he told Pope, that he had almost finished "an Essay on Propriety and Impropriety in Design, Thought, and Expression, illustrated by examples in both kinds, from the writings of Mr. Pope;" but he offers, if this intended work should create the least pain to Mr. Pope, he was willing, with all his heart, to have it run thus: "An Essay on Propriety and Impropriety, &c., illustrated by Examples of the first, from the writings of Mr. Pope, and of the rest, from those of the author."—To the romantic generosity of this extraordinary proposal, Pope replied, "I acknowledge your generous offer, to give *examples of imperfections* rather out of *your own works* than mine: I consent, with all my heart, to your confining them to *mine*, for two reasons: the one, that I fear your sensibility that way is greater than my own: the other is a better; namely, that I intend to correct the faults you find, if they are such as I expect from Mr. Hill's cool judgment*."

Where, in literary history, can be found the parallel of such an offer of self-immolation? This was a literary quarrel like that of lovers, where to hurt each other would have given pain to both parties. Such skill and desire to strike, with so much tenderness in inflicting a wound; so much compliment, with so much complaint; have perhaps never met together, as in the romantic hostility of this literary chivalry.

* The six Letters are preserved in Ruffhead's Appendix, No. I.

A NARRATIVE

OF THE

EXTRAORDINARY TRANSACTIONS RESPECTING THE PUBLICATION OF POPE'S LETTERS.

JOHNSON observes, that "one of the passages of POPE's life which seems to deserve some inquiry, was the publication of his letters by CURLL, the rapacious bookseller." Our great literary biographer has expended more research on this occasion than his usual penury of literary history allowed; and yet has only told the close of the strange transaction—the previous parts are more curious, and the whole cannot be separated. Joseph Warton has only tranſcribed Johnson's narrative. It is a piece of literary history of an uncommon complexion; and it is worth the pains of telling, if Pope, as I consider him to be, was the subtile weaver of a plot, whose texture had been close enough for any political conspiracy. It throws a strong light on the portrait I have touched of him. He conducted all his literary transactions with the arts of a Minister of State; and the genius which he wasted on this literary stratagem, in which he so completely succeeded, might have been perhaps sufficient to have organised rebellion.

It is well known that the origin of Pope's first letters given to the public, arose from the distresses of a cast-off mistress of one of his old friends (H. Cromwell), who had given her the letters of Pope, which she knew to value: these she afterwards sold to Curll, who preserved the originals in his shop, so that no suspicions could arise of their authenticity. This very collection is now deposited among Rawlinson's MSS. at the Bodleian.

This single volume was successful; and when Pope, to do justice to the memory of Wycherley, which had been injured by a posthumous volume, printed some of their letters, Curll, who seemed now to consider that all he could touch was his own property, and that his little volume might serve as a foundation-stone, immediately announced *a new edition* of it, with *Additions*, meaning to include the letters of Pope and Wycherley. Curll now became so fond of *Pope's Letters*, that he advertised for any: "no questions to be asked." Curll was willing to be credulous: having proved to the world he had some originals, he imagined these would sanction even spurious ones. A man who, for a particular purpose, sought to be imposed on, easily obtained his wish: they translated letters of Voiture to Mademoiselle Rambouillet, and despatched them to the eager Bibliopolist to print, as Pope's to Miss Blount. He went on increasing his collection; and, skilful in catering for the literary taste of the town, now inflamed their appetite by dignifying it with "Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence!"

But what were the feelings of Pope during these successive surreptitious editions? He had discovered that his genuine letters were liked; the grand experiment with the public had been made for him, while he was deprived of the profits; yet for he himself to publish his own letters, which I shall prove he had prepared, was a thing unheard of in the nation. All this was vexatious; and to stop the book-jobber and open the market for himself, was a point to be obtained.

While Curll was proceeding, wind and tide in his favour, a new and magnificent prospect burst upon him. A certain person, masked by the initials P. T., understanding Curll was preparing *a Life of Pope*, offered him "divers Memoirs gratuitously;" hinted that he was well known to Pope; but the poet had lately "treated him as a stranger." P. T. desires an answer from E. C. by the Daily Advertiser, which was complied with. There are passages in this letter which, I think, prove Pope to be the projector of it: his family is here said to be allied to Lord Downe's; his father is called a merchant. Pope could not bear the reproach of Lady Mary's line:—

"Hard as thy heart, and as *thy birth obscure*."

He always hinted at noble relatives; but Tyers tells us, from the information of a relative, that "his father turns out, at last, to have been a linen-draper in the Strand:" therefore P. T. was at least telling a story which Pope had no objection should be repeated.

The second letter of P. T., for the first was designed only to break the ice, offers Curll "a large Collection of Letters from the early days of Pope to the year 1727." He gives an excellent notion of their value: "They will open very many scenes new to the world, and make the most authentic Life and Memoirs that could be." He desires they may be announced to the world immediately, in Curll's precious style, that he

"might not appear himself to have set the whole thing a-foot, and afterwards he might plead he had only sent some letters to complete the Collection." He asks nothing, and the originals were offered to be deposited with Curll.

Curll, secure of this promised addition, but still craving for more and more, composed a magnificent announcement, which, with P. T.'s entire correspondence, he inclosed in a letter to Pope himself. The letters were now declared to be a "Critical, Philological, and Historical Correspondence."—His own letter is no bad specimen of his keen sense; but after what had so often passed, his impudence was equal to the better quality.

"Sir,

"To convince you of my readiness to oblige you, the inclosed is a demonstration. You have, as he says, disobliged a gentleman, the initial letters of whose name are P. T. I have some other papers in the same hand, relating to your *family*, which I will show, if you desire a sight of them. Your letters to Mr. Cromwell are out of print; and I intend to print them very beautifully, in an octavo volume. I have more to say than is proper to write; and if you will give me a meeting, I will wait on you with pleasure, and close all differences between you and yours,

"E. CURLL."

Pope, surprised, as he pretends, at this address, consulted with his friends; everything evil was suggested against Curll. They conceived that his real design was "to get Pope to look over the former edition of his Letters to Cromwell, and then to print it, as *revised* by Mr. Pope; as he sent an *obscene book* to a *Bishop*, and then advertised it as *corrected* and *revised* by him;" or perhaps to extort money from Pope for suppressing the MS. of P. T. and then publish it, saying P. T. had kept another copy. Pope thought proper to answer only by this public advertisement:—

"Whereas A. P. hath received a letter from E. C., bookseller, pretending that a person, the initials of whose name are P. T., hath offered the said E. C. to print a large Collection of Mr. P.'s Letters, to which E. C. required an answer: A. P. having never had, nor intending to have, any private correspondence with the said E. C., gives it him in this manner. That he knows no such person as P. T.; that he believes he hath no such collection; and that he thinks the whole a forgery, and shall not trouble himself at all about it."

Curll replied, denying he had endeavoured to *correspond* with Mr. Pope, and affirms that he had written to him by *direction*.

It is now the plot thickens. P. T. suddenly takes umbrage, accuses Curll of having "betrayed him to 'Squire Pope,' but you and he both shall soon be convinced it was no forgery. Since you would not comply with my proposal to advertise, I have printed them at my own expense." He offers the books to Curll for sale.

Curll on this has written a letter, which takes a full view of the entire transaction. He seems to have grown tired of what he calls "such jealous, groundless, and dark negotiations." P. T. now found it necessary to produce something more than a shadow—an agent appears, whom Curll considered to be a clergyman, who assumed the name of R. Smith. The first proposal was, that P. T.'s letters should be returned, that he might feel secure from all possibility of detection; so that P. T. terminates his part in this literary freemasonry as a non-entity.

Here Johnson's account begins.—"Curll said, that one evening a man in a clergyman's gown, but with a lawyer's band, brought and offered to sale a number of printed volumes, which he found to be Pope's Epistolary Correspondence; that he asked no name, and was told none, but gave the price demanded, and thought himself authorised to use his purchase to his own advantage." Smith, the clergyman, left him some copies, and promised more.

Curll now, in all the elation of possession, rolled his thunder in an advertisement still higher than ever.—"Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence regularly digested, from 1704 to 1734:" to lords, earls, baronets, doctors, ladies, &c. with their respective answers, and whose names glittered in the advertisement. The original MSS. were also announced to be seen at his house.

But at this moment Curll had not received many books, and no MSS. The advertisement produced the effect designed: it roused public notice, and it alarmed several in the House of Lords. Pope doubtless instigated his friends there. The Earl of Jersey moved, that to publish letters of lords was a breach of privilege; and Curll was brought before the House.

This was an unexpected incident; and P. T. once more throws his dark shadow across the path of Curll to hearten him, had he wanted courage to face all the lords. P. T. writes to instruct him in his answers to their examination; but to take the utmost care to conceal P. T.; he assures him that the lords could not touch a hair of his head if he behaved firmly; that he should only answer their interrogatories by declaring he received the letters from different persons; that some were given, and some were bought. P. T. reminds one, on this occasion, of Junius's correspondence on a like threat with his publisher.

"Curll appeared at the bar," says Johnson, "and knowing himself in no great danger, spoke of Pope with very little reverence. 'He has,'

said Curll, 'a knack at versifying; but in prose I think myself a match for him.' When the Orders of the House were examined, none of them appeared to have been infringed: Curll went away triumphant, and Pope was left to seek some other remedy." The fact, not mentioned by Johnson, is, that though Curll's flourishing advertisement had announced *letters written by lords*, when the volumes were examined not one written by a lord appeared.

The letter Curll wrote on the occasion to one of these dark familiars, the pretended clergyman, marks his spirit and sagacity. It contains a remarkable passage. Some readers will be curious to have the productions of so celebrated a personage, who appears to have exercised considerable talents.

"Dear Sir, 15th May, 1735.

"I am just again going to the Lords to finish Pope. I desire you to send me the *sheets* to *perfect* the first fifty books, and likewise the *remaining three hundred books*: and pray be at the Standard Tavern this evening, and I will pay you twenty pounds more. My defence is right; I only told the lords I did not know from whence the books came, and that my wife received them. This was strict truth, and prevented all further inquiry. *The lords declared they had been made Pope's tools.* I put myself on this single point, and insisted, as there was not any Peer's letter in the book, I had not been guilty of any breach of privilege. I depend that the *books* and the *imperfections* will be sent; and believe of P. T. what I hope he believes of me.

"For the Rev. Mr. Smith."

The reader observes that Curll talks of a great number of *books not received*, and of *the few* which he has received, as *imperfect*. The fact is, the whole bubble is on the point of breaking. He, masked in the initial letters, and he, who wore the masquerade dress of a clergyman's gown with a lawyer's band, suddenly picked a quarrel with the duped bibliopolist: they now accuse him of a design he had of betraying them to the Lords!

The tantalized and provoked Curll then addressed the following letter to "The Rev. Mr. Smith," which, both as a specimen of this celebrated personage's "prose," in which he thought himself "a match for Pope," and exhibiting some traits of his character, will entertain the curious reader.

"Sir, Friday, 16 May, 1735.

"1st, I am falsely accused. 2. I value not any man's change of temper; I will never change my VERACITY for falsehood, in owning a fact of which I am innocent. 3. I did not own the books came from *across the water*, nor ever *named you*; all I said was, that the books came *by water*. 4. When the books were seized, I sent my son to convey a letter to you; and as you told me everybody knew you in Southwark, I bid him make a strict inquiry, as I am sure you would have done in such an exigency. 5. Sir, *I have acted justly* in this affair, and that is what I shall always think wisely. 6. I will be kept no longer in the dark; P. T. is *Will o' the Wisp*; all the books I have had are imperfect; the first fifty had no titles nor prefaces; the last five bundles seized by the Lords contained but thirty-eight in each bundle, which amounts to one hundred and ninety, and fifty, is in all but two hundred and forty books. 7. As to the loss of a future copy, I despise it, nor will I be concerned with any more such dark suspicious dealers. But now, sir, I'll tell you what I will do: when I have the *books perfected* which I have already received, and *the rest of the impression*, I will pay you for them. But what do you call this usage? First take a note for a month, and then want it to be changed for one of Sir Richard Hoare's. My note is as good, for any sum I give it, as the Bank, and shall be as punctually paid. I always say, *gold is better than paper*. But if this dark converse goes on, I will instantly reprint the whole book; and, as a supplement to it, all the letters P. T. ever sent me, of which I have exact copies, together with all your originals, and give them in upon oath to my Lord Chancellor. You talk of *trust*—P. T. has not reposed any in me, for he has my money and notes for imperfect books. Let me see, sir, either P. T. or yourself, or you'll find the Scots proverb verified, *Nemo me impune lacessit.*

"Your abused humble servant,

"E. CURLL.

"P.S. Lord ——— I attend this day. LORD DELAWAR I SUP WITH TO-NIGHT. Where *Pope* has one lord, I have twenty."

After this, Curll announced "Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence, with the *initial correspondence* of P. T. R. S. &c." But the shadowy correspondents now publicly declared that they could give *no title* whatever to Mr. Pope's letters, with which they had furnished CURLL, and never pretended any; that therefore any bookseller had the same right of printing them: and, in respect to money matters between them, he had given them notes not negotiable, and had never paid them fully for the copies, perfect and imperfect, which he had sold.

Thus terminated this dark transaction between Curll and his *initial* correspondents. He still persisted in printing several editions of the letters of Pope, which furnished the poet with a modest

pretext to publish an authentic edition—the very point to which the whole of this dark and intricate plot seems to have been really directed.

Were Pope not concerned in this mysterious transaction, how happened it that the letters which P. T. actually printed were genuine? To account for this, Pope promulgated a new fact. Since the first publication of his letters to his friend Cromwell, wrenched from the distressed female who possessed them, our poet had been advised to collect his letters; and these he had preserved by inserting them in two books; either the originals or the copies. For this purpose an amanuensis or two were employed by Pope when these books were in the country, and by the Earl of Oxford when they were in town. Pope pretended that Curll's letters had been extracted from these two books, but sometimes imperfectly transcribed, and sometimes interpolated. Pope, indeed, offered a reward of twenty pounds to "P. T." and "R. Smith, who passed for a clergyman," if they would come forward, and discover the whole of this affair; or "if they had acted, as it was reported, by the *direction* of any other person." They never appeared. Lintot, the son of the great rival of Curll, told Dr. Johnson, that his father had been offered the same parcel of printed books, and that Pope knew better than anybody else how Curll obtained the copies.

Dr. Johnson, although he appears not to have been aware of the subtle intricacy of this extraordinary plot, has justly drawn this inference: "To make the copies public was the only purpose of Pope, because the numbers offered for sale by the private messengers, showed that hope of gain could not have been the motive of the impression. It seems that Pope, being desirous of printing his letters, and not knowing how to do, without imputation of vanity, what has in this country been done very rarely, contrived an appearance of compulsion; when he could complain that his letters were surreptitiously printed, he might decently and defensively publish them himself."

I have observed, how the first letter of P. T. pretending to be written by one who owed no kindness to Pope, bears the evident impression of his own hand; for it contains matters not exactly true, but exactly what Pope wished should appear in his own life. That he had prepared his letters for publication, appears by the story of the two MS. books—that the printed ones came by water, would look as if they had been sent from his house at Twickenham: and, were it not absurd to pretend to decipher initials, P. T. might be imagined to indicate the name of the owner, as well as his place of abode.

Worsdale, an indifferent painter, was a man of some humour in personating a character, for he performed "Old Lady Scandal" in one of his own farces. He was also a literary adventurer, for, according to Mrs. Pilkington's Memoirs, wishing to be a poet as well as a mimic, he got her and her husband to write all the verses which passed with his name; such a man was well adapted to be this clergyman with the lawyer's band, and Worsdale has asserted that he was really employed by his friend Pope on this occasion.

Such is the intricate narrative of this involved transaction. Pope completely succeeded, by the most subtile manœuvres imaginable; the incident which perhaps was not originally expected, of having his letters brought before the examination at the House of Lords most amply gratified his pride, and awakened public curiosity. "He made the House of Lords," says Curll, "his tools." Greater ingenuity, perplexity, and secrecy, have scarcely been thrown into the conduct of the writer, or writers, of the Letters of Junius.

POPE AND CIBBER;

CONTAINING

A VINDICATION OF THE COMIC WRITER.

POPE attacked CIBBER from personal motives—by dethroning Theobald, in the Dunciad, to substitute CIBBER, he made the satire not apply—CIBBER'S facetious and serious remonstrance—CIBBER'S inimitable good-humour—an apology for what has been called his "effrontery"—perhaps a modest man, and undoubtedly a man of genius—his humorous defence of his deficiency in Tragedy, both in acting and writing—Pope more hurt at being exposed as a ridiculous lover than as a bad man—an account of "The Egotist, or Colley upon Cibber," a kind of supplement to the "Apology for his Life," in which he has drawn his own character with great freedom and spirit.

POPE'S quarrel with Cibber may serve to check the haughtiness of genius; it is a remarkable instance how good-humour can gently draw a boundary round the arbitrary power, whenever the wantonness of satire would conceal calumny. But this quarrel will become even more interesting, should it throw a new light on the character of one, whose originality of genius seems little suspected. Cibber showed a happy address in a very critical situation; and obtained an honourable triumph over the malice of a great genius, whom, while he complained of he admired, and almost loved the Cynic.

Pope, after several "flirts," as Cibber calls them, from slight personal motives, which Cibber has fully opened*, at length from "peevish weakness," as Lord Orford has happily expressed it, closed his insults by dethroning Theobald, and substituting Cibber; but as he would not lose

* Johnson says, that though "Pope attacked Cibber with acrimony, the provocation is not easily discoverable." But the statements of Cibber, which have never been contradicted, show sufficient motives to excite the poetic irascibility. It was Cibber's "fling" at the unowned and condemned comedy of the triumvirate of wits, Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot, "Three Hours after Marriage," when he performed Bayes in the Rehearsal, that incurred the immortal odium. There was no malice on Cibber's side; for it was then the custom to restore the zest of that obsolete dramatic satire, by introducing allusions to any recent theatrical event. The plot of this ridiculous comedy hinging on the deep contrivance of two lovers getting access to the wife of a virtuoso, "one curiously swathed up like an Egyptian mummy, and the other slily covered in the pasteboard skin of a crocodile," was an incident so *extremely natural*, that it seemed congenial with the high imagination and the deep plot of a Bayes! Poor Cibber, in the gaiety of his *impromptu*, made the "fling;" and, unluckily, it was applauded by the audience! The irascibility of Pope too strongly authenticated one of the three authors. "In the swelling of his heart, after the play was over, he came behind the scenes with his lips pale and his voice trembling, to call me to account for the insult; and accordingly fell upon me with all the foul language that a wit out of his senses could be capable of, choked with the foam of his passion." Cibber replied with dignity, insisted on the privilege of the character, and that he would repeat the same jest as long as the public approved of it. Pope would have certainly approved of Cibber's manly conduct, had he not been the author himself. To this circumstance may be added the reception which the town and the court bestowed on Cibber's "Nonjuror," a satire on the politics of the jacobite faction; Pope appears, under the assumed name of *Barnevelt*, to have published "an odd piece of wit, proving that the Nonjuror, in its design, its characters, and almost every scene of it, was a closely-couched jacobite libel against the Government." Cibber says that "this was so shrewdly maintained, that I almost liked the jest myself." Pope seems to have been fond of this new species of irony; for, in the

what he had already written, this change disturbed the whole decorum of the satiric fiction. Things of opposite natures, joined into one, became the poetical chimera of Horace. The hero of the Dunciad is neither Theobald nor Cibber; Pope forced a dunce to appear as Cibber; but this was not making Cibber a dunce. This error in Pope emboldened Cibber in the contest, for he still insisted that the satire did not apply to him*; and humorously compared the libel "to a purge with a wrong label," and Pope "to an apothecary who did not mind his business."

Cibber triumphed in the arduous conflict—though sometimes he felt that, like the Patriarch of old, he was wrestling, not with an equal, but one of celestial race, "and the hollow of his thigh was out of joint." Still, however, he triumphed, by that singular felicity of character, that inimitable *gaieté de cœur*, that honest simplicity of truth, from which flowed so warm an admiration of the genius of his adversary; and that exquisite *tact* in the characters of men, which carried down this child of airy humour to the verge of his ninetieth year, with all the enjoyments of strong animal spirits, and all that innocent egotism which became frequently a source of his own raillery †. He has applied to himself the epithet "Impenetrable," which was probably in the mind of Johnson when he noticed his "impenetrable impudence." A Critic has charged him with "effrontery ‡."

Pastorals of Phillips, he showed the same sort of ingenuity, and he repeated the same charge of political mystery against his own finest poem; for he proved by many "merry inuendoes," that "The Rape of the Lock" was as audacious a libel as the pretended Barnevelt had made out the Non-juror to be.

* Cibber did not obtrude himself in this contest. Had he been merely a poor vain creature, he had not preserved so long a silence. His good-temper was without anger, but he remonstrates with no little dignity, when he chooses to be solemn; though to be playful was more natural to him. "If I have lain so long stoically silent, or unmindful of your satirical favours, it was not so much for want of a proper reply, as that I thought there never needed a public one; for all people of sense would know what truth or falsehood there was in what you said of me, without my wisely pointing it out to them. Nor did I choose to follow your example, of being so much a self-tormentor, as to be concerned at whatever opinion of me any published invective might infuse into people unknown to me. Even the malicious, though they may like the libel, don't always believe it." His reason for reply is, that his silence should not be further reproached "as a plain confession of my being a bankrupt in wit, if I don't immediately answer those bills of discredit you have drawn upon me." There is no doubt that Cibber perpetually found instigators to encourage these attacks; and one forcible argument he says was, that "a disgrace, from such a pen, would stick upon me to posterity." He seems to be aware, that his acquaintance cheer him to the lists "for their particular amusement."

† Armstrong, who was a keen observer of man, has expressed his uncommon delight in the company of Cibber. "Besides his abilities as a writer, (as a writer of Comedies, Armstrong means,) and the singular variety of his powers as an actor, he was to the last one of the most agreeable, cheerful, and best-humoured men you would ever wish to converse with."—*Warton's Pope, vol.* iv. 160.

Cibber was one of those rare beings, whose dispositions Hume describes "as preferable to an inheritance of 10,000*l.* a year."

‡ Dr. Aikin, in his Biographical Dictionary, has thus written on Cibber: "It cannot be doubted, that, at the time, the contest was more painful to Pope than to Cibber. But Pope's satire is immortal, whereas Cibber's sarcasms are no longer read. *Cibber may therefore be represented to future times with less credit for abilities than he really deserves;* for he was certainly no dunce, though not, in the higher sense of the word, a man of genius. *His effrontery and vanity* could not be easily overcharged, even by a foe. Indeed, they are striking features in the portrait drawn by himself." Dr. Aikin's political morality often vented its indignation at the successful injustice of great Power! Why should not the same spirit conduct him in the Literary Republic? With the just sentiments he has given on Cibber, it was the duty of an intrepid Critic to raise a moral feeling against the despotism of genius, and to have protested against the arbitrary power of Pope. It is participating in the injustice to pass it by, without even a regret at its effect.

As for Cibber himself, he declares he was *not impudent*, and I am disposed to take his own word, for he *modestly* asserts this, in a remark on Pope's expression,

"Cibberian forehead,"

"by which I find you modestly mean *Cibberian impudence*, as a sample of the strongest.—Sir, your humble servant—but pray, Sir, in your 'Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot' (where, by the way, in your ample description of a great Poet, you slily hook in a whole hat-full of virtues to your own character) have not you this particular line?

"And thought a *Lie*, in verse or prose, the same—"

Critics are apt to admit too much of traditional opinion into their own; it is necessary sometimes to correct the knowledge we receive. For my part, I can almost believe that Cibber was a *modest man!* * as he was most certainly a man of genius. Cibber had lived a dissipated life, and his philosophical indifference, with his careless gaiety, was the breast-plate which even the wit of Pope failed to pierce. During twenty years' perse-

Cibber laments it is not so, for "any accusation in smooth verse will always sound well, though it is not tied down to have a tittle of truth in it, when the strongest defence in poor flumble prose, not having that harmonious advantage takes nobody by the ear—very hard upon an innocent man! For suppose in prose, now, I were as confidently to insist that you were an *honest, good-natured, inoffensive creature*, would my barely saying so be any proof of it? No, sure. Why, then, might it not be supposed an equal truth, that both our assertions were equally false? *Yours*, when you call me *impudent*; *mine*, when I call you *modest*, &c. While my superiors suffer me occasionally to sit down with them, I hope it will be thought that rather the *Papal* than the *Cibberian* forehead ought to be out of countenance." I give this as a specimen of Cibber's serious reasonings—they are poor; and they had been so from a greater genius; for ridicule and satire, being only a mere abuse of eloquence, can never be effectually opposed by truisms. Satire must be repelled by satire; and Cibber's *sarcasms* obtained what Cibber's *reasonings* failed in.

* Vain as Cibber has been called, and vain as he affects to be, he has spoken of his own merits as a comic writer,—and he was a very great one,—with a manly moderation, very surprising indeed in a vain man. Pope has sung in his Dunciad, most harmoniously inhuman,

"How, with less reading than makes felons scape,
Less human genius than God gives an ape,
Small thanks to France, and none to Rome or Greece,
A patch'd, vamp'd, future, old, revived new piece;
'Twixt Plautus, Fletcher, Congreve, and Corneille,
Can make a CIBBER, JOHNSON, and OZELL.

Blasting as was this criticism, it could not raise the anger of the gay and careless Cibber. Yet what could have put it to a sharper test? Johnson and Ozell are names which have long disappeared from the dramatic annals, and could only have been coupled with Cibber to give an idea of what the Satirist meant by "the human genius of an ape." But listen to the mild, yet the firm tone of Cibber—he talks like injured innocence, and he triumphs over Pope, in all the dignity of truth.—I appeal to Cibber's posterity!

"And pray, sir, why my name under this scurvy picture? I flatter myself, that if you had not put it there, nobody else would have thought it like me; nor can I easily believe that you yourself do: but perhaps you imagined it would be a laughing ornament to your verse, and had a mind to divert other people's spleen with it as well as your own. Now let me hold up my head a little, and then we shall see how the features hit me." He proceeds to relate, how "many of those plays have lived the longer for my meddling with them." He mentions several, which "had been dead to the stage out of all memory, which have since been in a constant course of acting above these thirty or forty years." And then he adds: "Do those altered plays at all take from the merit of those *more successful pieces*, which were *entirely my own?*—When a man is abused, he has a right to speak even laudable truths of himself, to confront his slanderer. Let me therefore add, that my first Comedy of *The Fool in Fashion* was as much (though not so valuable) an original, as any work Mr. Pope himself has produced. It is now forty-seven years since its first appearance on the stage, where it has kept its station, to this very day, without ever lying one winter dormant. Nine years after this, I brought on *The Careless Husband*, with still greater success; and was that too

'A patch'd, vamp'd, future, old, revived new piece?'

Let the many living spectators of these plays, then, judge between us, whether the above verses came from the honesty of a Satirist, who would be thought, like you, the upright censor of mankind. Sir, this libel was below you! Satire, without truth, recoils upon its author, and must, at other times, render him suspected of prejudice, even where he may be just; as frauds, in religion, make more Atheists than Converts; and the bad heart, Mr. Pope, that points an injury with verse, makes it the more unpardonable, as it is not the result of sudden passion, but of an indulged and slowly-meditating ill-nature. What a merry mixed mortal has nature made you, that can debase that strength and excellence of genius to the lowest human weakness, that of offering unprovoked injuries, at the hazard of your being ridiculous too, when the venom you spit falls short of your aim!" I have quoted largely, to show that Cibber was capable of exerting a dignified remonstrance, as well as pointing the lightest, yet keenest, shafts of sarcastic wit.

cution for his unlucky Odes, he never lost his temper: he would read to his friends the best things pointed against them, with all the spirit the authors could wish; and would himself write epigrams, for the pleasure of hearing them repeated while sitting in coffee-houses; and whenever they were applauded as "Palpable hits!"—"Keen!"—"Things with a spirit in them!"—he enjoyed these attacks on himself by himself*. If this be vanity, it is at least "*Cibberian.*"

It was, indeed, the singularity of his personal character, which so long injured his genius, and laid him open to the perpetual attacks of his contemporaries, who were mean enough to ridicule undisguised foibles, but dared not be just to the redeeming virtues of his genius. Yet his genius far exceeded his literary frailties. He knew he was no poet, yet he would string wretched rhymes, even when not salaried for them; and once wrote an Essay on Cicero's character, for which his dotage was scarcely an apology;—so much he preferred amusement to prudence. Another foible was to act tragedies with a squeaking voice†, and to write them with a genius about the same size for the sublime; but the malice of his contemporaries seemed to forget that he was creating new dramatic existences, in the exquisite personifications of his comic characters; and was producing some of our standard comedies, composed with such real genius, that they still support the reputation of the English stage.

In the "Apology for his Life," Cibber had shown himself a generous, and an ill-treated adversary, and at all times was prodigal of his eulogiums, even after the death of Pope; but, when remonstrance and good temper failed to sheathe with their oil the sharp sting of the wasp, as his weakest talent was not the ludicrous, he resolved to gain the laughers over, and threw Pope into a very ridiculous attitude‡. It was

* Ayre's Memoirs of Pope, vol. ii. p. 82.

† With what good-humour he retorts a piece of sly malice of Pope's; who, in the notes to the Dunciad, after quoting Jacob's account of Cibber's talents, adds: "Mr. Jacob omitted to remark, that he is particularly admirable in tragedy."—To which Cibber rejoins: "Ay, sir, and your remark has omitted, too, that (with all his commendations) I can't dance upon the rope, or make a saddle, nor play upon the organ. My dear, dear Mr. Pope, how could a man of your stinging capacity let so tame, so low a reflection escape him? Why, this hardly rises above the pretty malice of Miss Molly. 'Aye, aye, you may think my sister as handsome as you please, but if you were to see her legs!'—If I have made so many crowded theatres laugh, and in the right place too, for above forty years together, am I to make up the number of your dunces, because I have not the equal talent of making them cry too? Make it your own case. Is what you have excelled in at all the worse, for your having so dismally dabbled in the farce of 'Three Hours after Marriage?'—What mighty reason will the world have to laugh at my weakness in tragedy, more than at yours in comedy?"

I will preserve one anecdote of that felicity of temper, that undisturbed good-humour, which never abandoned Cibber in his most distressful moments. When he brought out, in 1724, his "Cæsar in Egypt," at a great expense, and "a beggarly account of empty boxes" was the result, it raised some altercations between the poet and his brother managers, the bard still struggling for another and another night. At length he closed the quarrel with a pun, which confessed the misfortune, with his own good-humour. In a periodical publication of the times, I find the circumstance recorded in this neat Epigram:—

"*On the Sixth Night of* CIBBER'S '*Cæsar in Egypt.*'

"When the pack'd audience from their posts retired,
And Julius in a general hiss expired;
Sage Booth to Cibber cried, 'Compute our gains!
These dogs of Egypt, and their dowdy queans,
But ill requite these habits and these scenes,
To rob Corneille for such a motley piece:
His geese were swans; but zounds! thy swans are geese!'
Rubbing his firm invulnerable brow,
The bard replied—'The critics must allow
'Twas ne'er in *Cæsar's destiny* TO RUN!'
Wilks bow'd, and bless'd the gay pacific pun."

‡ A wicked wag of a Lord had enticed Pope into a tavern, and laid a love-plot against his health. Cibber describes his resolute interference by snatching "our little Homer by the heels. This was done for the honour of our nation. Homer would have been too serious a sacrifice to our evening's amusement." He has metamorphosed our Apollo into a "Tom-tit;" but the Ovidian warmth, however ludicrous, will not *now* admit of a narrative. This story, by our comic writer, was accompanied by a print, that was seen by more persons, probably, than read the Dunciad. In his second letter, Cibber, alluding to the vexation of Pope on this ridiculous story, observes: "To have been exposed as *a bad man*, ought to have given thee thrice the concern of being shown a *ridiculous lover.*"—And now that he had discovered that he could touch the nerves of Pope,

extorted from Cibber by this insulting line of Pope's :—

"And has not Colley, too, his Lord and w—e?"

It seems that Pope had once the same! But a ridiculous story, suited to the taste of the loungers, nettled Pope more than the keener remonstrances and the honest truths which Cibber has urged. Those who write libels, invite imitation.

Besides the two letters addressed by Cibber to Pope, this quarrel produced a moral trifle, or rather a philosophical curiosity, respecting Cibber's own character, which is stamped with the full impression of all its originality.

The title, so expressive of its design, and the whim and good-humour of the work, which may be considered as a curious supplement to the "Apology for his Life," could scarcely have been imagined, and most certainly could not have been executed, but by the genius who dared it. I give the title in the note*. It is a curious exemplification of what Shaftesbury has so fancifully described as "self-inspection." This little work is a conversation between "Mr. Frankly, and his old acquaintance, Colley Cibber." Cibber had the spirit of making this Mr. Frankly speak the bitterest things against himself; and he must have been an attentive reader of all the keenest reproaches his enemies ever had thrown out. This caustic censor is not a man of straw, set up to be easily knocked down. He has as much vivacity and wit as Cibber himself, and not seldom has the better of the argument. But the gravity and the levity blended in this little piece form admirable contrasts: and Cibber, in this varied effusion, acquires all our esteem for that open simplicity, that unalterable good-humour, which flowed from Nature, and that fine spirit that touches everything with life; yet, as he himself confesses, the main accusation of Mr. Frankly, that "his philosophical air will come out at last mere vanity in masquerade," may be true.

I will attempt to collect some specimens of this extraordinary production, because they harmonise with the design of the present work, and afford principles, in regard to preserving an equability of temper, which may guide us in Literary Quarrels.

Frankly observes, on Cibber's declaration that he is not uneasy at Pope's satire, that "no blockhead is so dull as not to be sore when he is called so; and (you'll excuse me) if that were to be your own case, why should we believe you would not be as uneasy at it as another blockhead?

Author. This is pushing me pretty home indeed; but I won't give out. For as it is not at all inconceivable, that a blockhead of my size may have a particular knack of doing some useful thing that might puzzle a wiser man to be master of, will not that blockhead still have something in him to be conceited of? If so, allow me but the vanity of supposing I may have had some such possible knack, and you will not wonder (though in many other points I may still be a blockhead) that I may, notwithstanding, be contented with my condition.

Frankly. Is it not commendable, in a man of parts, to be warmly concerned for his reputation?

Author. In what regards his honesty or honour, I will make some allowance; but for the reputation of his parts, not one tittle.

Frankly. How! not to be concerned for what half the learned world are in a continual war about.

Author. So are another half about religion; but neither Turk or Pope, swords or anathemas, can alter truth! There it stands! always visible to reason, self-defended and immovable! Whatever it *was*, or *is*, it ever *will be!* As no attack can alter, so no defence can add to its proportion.

Frankly. At this rate, you pronounce all controversies in wit to be either needless or impertinent.

Author. When one in a hundred happens *not* to be so, or to make amends for being either by its pleasantry, we ought in justice to allow it a great rarity. A reply to a just satire or criticism will seldom be thought better of.

Frankly. May not a reply be a good one?

Author. Yes, but never absolutely necessary; for as your work (or reputation) must have been good or bad, before it was censured, your reply to that censure could not alter it: it would still be but what it was. If it was good, the attack could not hurt it; if bad, the reply could not mend it*.

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he throws out one of the most ludicrous analogies to the figure of our bard :—"When crawling in thy dangerous deed of darkness, I gently, with a finger and a thumb, picked off thy small round body by thy long legs, like a spider making love in a cobweb."

* "The EGOTIST, or *Colley* upon *Cibber;* being his own picture retouched, to so *plain* a likeness, that no one, *now*, would have the face to own it, BUT HIMSELF.

'But one stroke more, and that shall be my last.'

DRYDEN.

London, 1743."

* How many good authors might pursue their studies in quiet, would they never reply to their critics, but on matters of fact, in which their honour may be involved. I have seen very tremendous criticisms on some works of real genius, like serpents on marble columns, wind and dart about, and spit their froth, but they die away on the pillars that enabled them to erect their malig-

Frankly. But slander is not always so impotent as you seem to suppose it; men of the best sense may be misled by it, or by their not inquiring after truth, may never come at it; and the vulgar, as they are less apt to be good than ill-natured, often mistake malice for wit, and have an uncharitable joy in commending it. Now, when this is the case, is not a tame silence, upon being satirically libelled, as liable to be thought guilt, or stupidity, as to be the result of innocence, or temper?—Self-defence is a very natural and just excuse for a reply.

Author. Be it so! But still that does not always make it necessary; for though slander, by their not weighing it, may pass upon some few people of sense for truth, and might draw great numbers of the vulgar into its party, the mischief can never be of long duration. *A satirical slander, that has no truth to support it, is only a great fish upon dry land: it may flounce and fling, and make a fretful pother, but it won't bite you; you need not knock it on the head; it will soon lie still, and die quietly of itself.*

Frankly. The single-sheet critics will find you employment.

Author. Indeed they won't. I'm not so mad as to think myself a match for the invulnerable.

Frankly. Have a care; there's Foulwit; though he can't feel, he can bite.

Author. Aye, so will bugs and fleas; but that's only for sustenance: everything must feed, you know; and your creeping critics are a sort of vermin, that if they could come to a king, would not spare him; yet, whenever they can persuade others to laugh at their jest upon me, I will honestly make one of the number; but I must ask their pardon, if that should be all the reply I can afford them—"

This "boy of seventy odd," for such he was when he wrote "The Egotist," unfolds his character by many lively personal touches. He declares he could not have "given the world so finished a coxcomb as Lord Foppington, if he had not found a good deal of the same stuff in himself to make him with." He addresses "A Postscript, To those few unfortunate Readers and Writers who may not have more sense than the Author:" and he closes, in all the fulness of his spirit, with a piece of consolation for those who are so cruelly attacked by superior genius.

"Let us then, gentlemen, who have the misfortune to lie thus at the mercy of those whose natural parts happen to be stronger than our own—let us, I say, make the most of our sterility! Let us double and treble the ranks of our thickness, that we may form an impregnable phalanx, and stand every way in front to the enemy! or, would you still be liable to less hazard, lay but yourselves down, as I do, flat and quiet upon your faces, when Pride, Malice, Envy, Wit, or Prejudice, let fly their formidable shot at you, what odds is it they don't all whistle over your head? Thus, too, though we may want the artillery of missive wit, to make reprisals, we may at least, in security, bid them kiss the tails we have turned to them. Who knows but, by this our supine, or rather prone serenity, their disappointed valour may become their own vexation? Or let us yet, at worst, but solidly stand our ground, like so many defensive stone-posts, and we may defy the proudest Jehu of them all to drive over us. Thus, gentlemen, you see that Insensibility is not without its comforts; and as I give you no worse advice than I have taken myself, and found my account in, I hope you will have the hardness to follow it, for your own good and the glory of

"Your impenetrable humble servant,

"C. C."

After all, one may perceive, that though the good-humour of poor Cibber was real, still the immortal satire of Pope had injured his higher feelings. He betrays his secret grief at his close, while he seems to be sporting with his pen; and though he appears to confide in the falsity of the satire, as his best chance for saving him from it, still he feels that the caustic ink of such a satirist must blister and spot wherever it falls. The anger of Warburton, and the sternness of Johnson, who seems always to have considered an actor as an inferior being among men of genius, have degraded Cibber. They never suspected that "a blockhead of his size could do what wiser men could not," and as a fine comic genius—command a whole province in human nature.

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nant forms to the public eye. They fall in due time; and weak must be the substance of that pillar, which does not stand, and look as beautiful, when the serpents have crawled over it, as before. Dr. Brown, in his Letter to Bishop Lowth, has laid down an axiom in literary criticism: "*A mere literary attack*, however well or ill-founded, would not easily have drawn me into a *public expostulation*; for every man's true literary character is best seen in his own writings. Critics may rail, disguise, insinuate, or pervert; yet still the object of their censures lies equally open to all the world. Thus the world becomes a competent judge of the merits of the work animadverted on. Hence the mere *author* hath a fair chance for a fair decision, at least among the judicious; and it is of no mighty consequence what opinions the *injudicious* form concerning mental abilities. For this reason, I have never replied to any of those numerous critics who have on different occasions honoured me with their regard." P. 4.

POPE AND ADDISON.

The quarrel between POPE and ADDISON originated in one of the infirmities of genius—a subject of inquiry even after their death, by Sir WILLIAM BLACKSTONE—POPE courts ADDISON—suspects ADDISON of jealousy—ADDISON's foible, to be considered a great poet—interview between the rivals, of which the result was the portrait of ATTICUS, for which ADDISON was made to sit.

AMONG the Literary Quarrels of POPE one acquires dignity and interest from the characters of both parties. It closed by producing the severest, but the most masterly portrait of one man of genius, composed by another, which has ever been hung on the satiric Parnassus, for the contemplation of ages. ADDISON must descend to posterity with the dark spots of ATTICUS staining a purity of character which had nearly proved immaculate.

The friendship between Pope and Addison was interrupted by one of the infirmities of genius. Tempers of watchful delicacy gather up in silence and darkness motives so shadowy in their origin, and of such minute growth, that, never breaking out into any open act, they escape all other eyes but those of the parties themselves. These causes of enmity are too subtle to bear the touch; they cannot be inquired after, nor can they be described; and it may be said, that the minds of such men have rather quarrelled than they themselves: they utter no complaints, but they avoid each other. All the world perceived that two authors of the finest genius had separated from motives on which both were silent, but which had evidently operated with equal force on both. Their admirers were very general, and at a time when literature divided with politics the public interest, the best feelings of the nation were engaged in tracking the obscure commencements and the secret growth of this literary quarrel, in which the amiable and moral qualities of Addison, and the gratitude and honour of Pope, were equally involved. The friends of either party pretended that their chiefs entertained a reciprocal regard for each other, while the illustrious characters themselves were living in a state [illegible] were departed, the same interest was general among the lovers of literature; but those obscure motives which had only influenced two minds—those imperceptible events, which are only events as they are watched by the jealousy of genius,—eluded the most anxious investigation. Yet so lasting and so powerful was the interest excited by this literary quarrel, that, within a few years, the elegant mind of Sir WILLIAM BLACKSTONE withdrew from the severity of profounder studies to inquire into the causes of a quarrel which was still exciting the most opposite opinions. Blackstone has judged and summed up; but though he evidently inclines to favour Addison, by throwing into the balance some explanation for the silence of Addison against the audible complaints of Pope; though sometimes he pleads as well as judges, and infers as well as proves; yet even Blackstone has not taken on himself to deliver a decision. His happy genius has only honoured literary history by the masterly force and luminous arrangement of investigation, to which, since the time of Bayle, it has been too great a stranger*.

At this day, removed from all personal influence and affections, and furnished with facts which contemporaries could not command, we take no other concern in this literary quarrel, but as far as curiosity and truth delight us in the study of

* Sir William Blackstone's Discussion on the Quarrel between Addison and Pope was communicated by Dr. Kippis in his Biographia Britannica, vol. i. p. 56. Blackstone is there designated as "a gentleman of considerable rank, to whom the public is obliged for works of much higher importance."

human nature. We are now of no party—we are only historians!

Pope was a young writer when introduced to Addison, by the intervention of that generously-minded friend of both, Steele. Addison eulogised Pope's "Essay on Criticism;" and this fine genius covering with his wing an unfledged bardling, conferred a favour which, in the estimation of a poet, claims a life of indelible gratitude.

Pope zealously courted Addison by his poetical aid on several important occasions; he gave all the dignity that fine poetry could confer on the science of medals, which Addison had written on, and wrote the finest prologue in the language for the Whig tragedy of his friend. Dennis attacked, and Pope defended, "Cato."* Addison might have disapproved both of the manner and the matter of the defence, but he did more—he insulted Pope by a letter to Dennis, which Dennis eagerly published as Pope's severest condemnation. An alienation of friendship must have already taken place, but by no overt act on Pope's side.

Not that, however, Pope had not found his affections weakened: the dark hints scattered in his letters, show that something was gathering in his mind. Warburton, from his familiar intercourse with Pope, must be allowed to have known his literary concerns more than any one; and when he drew up the narrative †, seems to me to have stated uncouthly, but expressively, the progressive state of Pope's feelings. According to that narrative, Pope "reflected," that after he had first published "The Rape of the Lock," then nothing more than a hasty *jeu d'esprit*, when he communicated to Addison his very original project of the whole Sylphid machinery, Addison chilled the ardent bard with his coldness, advised him against any alteration, and to leave it as "a delicious little thing, *merum sal.*" It was then, says Warburton, "Mr. Pope began to *open his eyes* to Addison's character." But when afterwards he discovered that Tickell's Homer was opposed to his, and judged, as Warburton says, "by *laying many odd circumstances* together," that Addison ‡, and not Tickell, was the author—the alienation on Pope's side was complete. No open breach indeed had yet taken place between the rival authors, who, as jealous of dominion as two princes, would still demonstrate, in their public edicts, their inviolable regard; while they were only watching the advantageous moment when they might take arms against each other.

Still Addison publicly bestowed great encomiums on Pope's Iliad, although he had himself composed the rival version, and in private preferred his own §. He did this with the same ease he had continued its encouragement while Pope was employed on it. We are astonished to discover such deep politics among literary Machiavels! Addison had certainly raised up a literary party. Sheridan, who wrote nearly with the knowledge of a contemporary, in his "Life of Swift," would naturally use the language and the feelings of the time; and in describing Ambrose Phillips, he adds, he was "one of Mr. Addison's little senate."

But in this narrative I have dropped some material parts. Pope believed, that Addison had employed Gildon to write against him, and had encouraged Phillips to asperse his character. We cannot, now, quite demonstrate these alleged facts; but we can show that Pope believed them, and that Addison does not appear to have refuted them ||. Such tales, whether entirely false or par-

* Dennis asserts in one of his pamphlets, that Pope, fermenting with envy at the success of Addison's "Cato," went to Lintot, and persuaded him to engage this redoubted critic to write the remarks on "Cato"—that Pope's gratitude to Dennis for having complied with his request, was the well-known narrative of Dennis "being placed as a lunatic in the hands of Dr. Norris, a curer of mad people, at his house in Hatton-garden, though at the same time I appeared publicly every day, both in the park and in the town." Can we suppose that Dennis tells a falsehood respecting Pope's desiring Lintot to engage Dennis to write down "Cato"? If true, did Pope wish to see Addison degraded, and at the same time take an opportunity of ridiculing the critic, without, however, answering his arguments? The secret history of literature is like that of politics!

† In the notes to the Prologue to the Satires.

‡ Pope's conjecture was perfectly correct. Dr. Warton confirms it from a variety of indisputable authorities.—*Warton's Pope*, vol. iv. p. 34.

§ In the Freeholder, May, 1716.

|| The strongest parts of Sir William Blackstone's discussion turn on certain inaccurate dates, of Ruffhead, in his statements, which show them to be inconsistent with the times when they are alleged to have happened. These erroneous dates had been detected in an able article in the Monthly Review of that work, April, 1769. Ruffhead is a tasteless, confused, and unskilful writer—Sir William has laid great stress on the incredible story of Addison paying Gildon to write against Pope, "a man so amiable in his moral character." It is possible that the Earl of Warwick, who conveyed the information, might have been a malicious, lying youth; but then Pope had some knowledge of mankind—he believed the story, for he wrote instantly, with honest though heated feelings, to Addison, and sent him, at that moment, the first sketch of the cha-

tially true, may be considered in this inquiry of little amount. The greater events must regulate the lesser ones.

Was Addison, then, jealous of Pope? Addison, in every respect, then, his superior; of established literary fame when Pope was yet young; preceding him in age and rank; and fortunate in all the views of human ambition. But what if Addison's foible was that of being considered a great poet? His political poetry had raised him to an undue elevation, and the growing celebrity of Pope began to offend him, not with the appearance of a meek rival, with whom he might have held divided empire, but as a master-spirit, that was preparing to reign alone. It is certain that Addison was the most feeling man alive at the fate of his poetry. At the representation of his "Cato," such was his agitation, that had "Cato" been condemned, the life of Addison might too have been shortened. When a wit had burlesqued some lines of this dramatic poem, his uneasiness at the innocent banter was equally oppressive; nor could he rest, till, by the interposition of a friend, he prevailed upon the author to burn them *.

To the facts already detailed, and to this disposition in Addison's temper, and to the quick and active suspicions of Pope, irritable, and ambitious of all the sovereignty of poetry, we may easily conceive many others of those obscure motives, and inviaible events, which none but Pope, alienated every day more and more from his affections for Addison, too acutely perceived, too profoundly felt, and too unmercifully avenged. These are alluded to, when the satirist sings,

Damn with faint praise; assent with civil leer;
And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike;
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike, &c.

Accusations crowded faster than the pen could write them down. Pope never composed with more warmth. No one can imagine that Atticus was an ideal personage, touched as it is with all the features of an extraordinary individual. In a word, it was recognised instantly by the individual himself; and it was suppressed by Pope for near twenty years, before he suffered it to escape to the public.

It was some time during their avowed rupture, for the exact period has not been given, that their friends promoted a meeting between these two great men. After a mutual lustration, it was imagined they might have expiated their error, and have been restored to their original purity. The interview did take place between the rival wits, and was productive of some very characteristic ebullitions, strongly corroborative of the facts as they have been stated here. This extraordinary interview has been frequently alluded to. There can be no doubt of the genuineness of the narrative; but I know not on what authority it came into the world †.

racter of Atticus. Addison used him very civilly ever after—but it does not appear that Addison ever contradicted the tale of the officious Earl. All these facts, which Pope repeated many years after to Spence, Sir William was not acquainted with, for they were transcribed from Spence's papers by Johnson, after Blackstone had written.

* From Lord Egmont's MS. Collections.—See the *Addenda to Kippis's Biographia Britannica.*

† The earliest and most particular narrative of this remarkable interview, I have hitherto only traced to "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of A. Pope, Esq.," by William Ayre, Esq., 1745, vol. i., p. 100. This work comes in a very suspicious form; it is a huddled compilation, yet contains some curious matters; and pretends, in the title-page, to be occasionally drawn from "original MSS. and the testimonies of persons of honour." He declares, in the preface, that he and his friends "had means and some helps which were never public." He sometimes appeals to several noble friends of Pope for his authority. But the mode of its publication, and that of its execution, are not in its favour. These volumes were written within six months of the decease of our poet; have no publisher's name; and yet the author, whoever he was, took out "a patent, under his majesty's royal signet," for securing the copyright. This Ayre is so obscure an author, though a translator of Tasso's Aminta, that he seems to have escaped even the minor chronicles of literature. At the time of its publication, there appeared "Remarks on Squire Ayre's Memoirs of Pope." The writer pretends he has discovered him to be only one of the renowned Edmund Curll's "squires," who, about that time, had created an order of literary squires, ready to tramp at the funeral of every great personage with his Life. The "Remarker" then addresses Curll, and insinuates he speaks from personal knowledge of the man:—"You have an adversaria of title-pages of your own contrivance, and which your authors are to write books to. Among what you call *the occasional, or black list*, I have seen Memoirs of Dean Swift, Pope, &c." Curll, indeed, was then sending forth many pseudo squires, with lives of Congreve, Mrs. Oldfield, &c.; all which contain some curious particulars, picked up in coffee-houses, conversation, or pamphlets of the day. This William Ayre I accept as "a squire of low degree," but a real personage. As for this interview, Ayre was certainly incompetent to the invention of a single stroke of

The interview between Addison and Pope took place in the presence of Steele and Gay. They met with cold civility. Addison's reserve wore away, as was usual with him, when wine and conversation imparted some warmth to his native phlegm. At a moment the generous Steele deemed auspicious, he requested Addison would perform his promise in renewing his friendship with Pope. Pope expressed his desire: he said he was willing to hear his faults, and preferred candour and severity rather than forms of complaisance; but he spoke in a manner as conceiving Addison, and not himself, had been the aggressor. So much like their humblest inferiors do great men act, under the influence of common passions: Addison was overcome with anger, which cost him an effort to suppress; but, in the formal speech he made, he reproached Pope with indulging a vanity that far exceeded his merit; that he had not yet attained to the excellence he imagined; and observed, that his verses had a different air when Steele and himself corrected them; and, on this occasion, reminded Pope of a particular line which Steele had improved in the Messiah *. Addison seems, at that moment, to have forgotten that he had trusted, for the last line of his own dramatic poem, rather to the inspiration of the poet he was so contemptuously lecturing than to his own. He proceeded with detailing all the abuse the herd of scribblers had heaped on Pope; and by declaring that his Homer was "an ill-executed thing," and Tickell's had all the spirit. We are told, he concluded "in a low hollow voice of feigned temper," in which he asserted, that he had ceased to be solicitous about his own poetical reputation, since he had entered into more public affairs; but, from friendship for Pope, desired him to be more humble, if he wished to appear a better man to the world.

When Addison had quite finished schooling his little rebel, Gay, mild and timid (for it seems, with all his love for Pope, his expectations from the court, from Addison's side, had tethered his gentle heart), attempted to say something. But Pope, in a tone far more spirited than all of them, without reserve, told Addison that he appealed from his judgment, and did not esteem him able to correct his verses; upbraided him as a pensioner from early youth, directing the learning which had been obtained by the public money to his own selfish desire of power, and that he "had always endeavoured to cuff down new-fledged merit." The conversation now became a contest, and was broken up without ceremony. Such was the notable interview between two rival wits, which only ended in strengthening their literary quarrel; and sent back the enraged satirist to his inkstand, where he composed a portrait, for which Addison was made to sit, with the fine *chiar' oscuro* of Horace, and with as awful and vindictive features as the sombre hand of Juvenal could have designed.

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the conversations detailed: where he obtained all these interesting particulars, I have not discovered. Johnson alludes to this interview, states some of its results, but refers to no other authority than floating rumours.

* The line stood originally, and nearly literally copied from Isaiah—

"He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes;"

which Steele re-touched, as it now stands—

"From every face he wipes off every tear."

Dr. Warton prefers the rejected verse. The latter, he thinks, has too much of modern quaintness. The difficulty of choice lies between that naked simplicity which scarcely affects, and those strokes of art which are too apparent.

BOLINGBROKE'S AND MALLET'S

POSTHUMOUS QUARREL WITH POPE.

Lord BOLINGBROKE affects violent resentment for POPE's pretended breach of confidence in having printed his "Patriot King"—WARBURTON's apology for POPE's disinterested intentions—BOLINGBROKE instigates MALLET to libel POPE, after the poet's death—The real motive for libelling POPE was BOLINGBROKE's personal hatred of WARBURTON, for the ascendancy the latter had obtained over the poet—Some account of their rival conflicts—BOLINGBROKE had unsettled POPE's religious opinions, and WARBURTON had confirmed his faith—POPE, however, refuses to abjure the Catholic religion—Anecdote of POPE's anxiety respecting a future state—MALLET's intercourse with POPE: anecdote of "The Apollo Vision," where MALLET mistook a sarcasm for a compliment—MALLET's character—Why LEONIDAS GLOVER declined writing the Life of Marlborough—BOLINGBROKE's character hit off—WARBURTON, the concealed object of this posthumous quarrel with POPE.

On the death of POPE, 1500 copies of one of Lord BOLINGBROKE's works, "The Patriot King," were discovered to have been secretly printed by Pope, but never published. The honest printer presented the whole to his Lordship, who burned the edition in his gardens at Battersea. The MS. had been delivered to our poet by his Lordship, with a request to print a few copies for its better preservation, and for the use of a few friends.

Bolingbroke affected to feel the most lively resentment for what he chose to stigmatise as "a breach of confidence." "His thirst of vengeance," says Johnson, "incited him to blast the memory of the man over whom he had wept in his last struggles; and he employed Mallet, another friend of Pope, to tell the tale to the public with all its aggravations. Warburton, whose heart was warm with his legacy, and tender by the recent separation," apologised for Pope. The irregular conduct which Bolingbroke stigmatised as a breach of trust, was attributed to a desire of perpetuating the work of his friend, who might have capriciously destroyed it. Our poet could have no selfish motive; he could not gratify his vanity by publishing the work as his own, nor his avarice by its sale, which could never have taken place till the death of its author; a circumstance not likely to occur during Pope's lifetime*.

The vindictive rage of Bolingbroke; the bitter invective he permitted MALLET to publish, as the editor of his works; and the two anonymous pamphlets of the latter, which I have noticed in the article of WARBURTON; are effects much too disproportionate to the cause which is usually assigned. JOHNSON does not develop the secret motives of what he has energetically termed "Bolingbroke's thirst of vengeance." He and Mallet carried their secret revenge beyond all bounds: the lordly Stoic and the irritated bardling, under the cloak of anonymous calumny, have but ill concealed the malignity of their passions. Let anonymous calumniators recollect, in the midst of their dark work, that if they escape the detection of their contemporaries, their reputation, if they have any to lose, will not probably elude the researches of the historian;—a fatal witness against them at the tribunal of posterity.

The preface of Mallet to the "Patriot King" of Bolingbroke, produced a literary quarrel; and

* At the time, to season the tale for the babble of Literary Tattlers, it was propagated that POPE intended, on the death of BOLINGBROKE, to sell this eighteen-penny pamphlet at a guinea a copy; which would have produced an addition of as many hundreds to the thousands which the poet had honourably reaped from his Homer. This was the ridiculous lie of the day, which lasted long enough to obtain its purpose, and to cast an odium on the shade of Pope. Pope must have been a miserable calculator of *survivorships*, if ever he had reckoned on this.

more pamphlets than perhaps I have discovered were published on this occasion.

Every lover of literature was indignant, to observe that the vain and petulant Mallet, under the protection of Pope's

"Guide, philosopher, and friend!"

should have been permitted to have aspersed Pope with the most degrading language. Pope is here always designated as "This Man." Thus "*This Man* was no sooner dead than Lord Bolingbroke received information that an entire edition, of 1500 copies of these papers, had been printed; that this very *Man* had corrected the press," &c. Could one imagine that this was the Tully of England, describing our Virgil? For Mallet was but the mouthpiece of Bolingbroke.

After a careful detection of many facts concerning the parties now before us, I must attribute the concealed motive of this outrage on Pope to the election the dying poet made of Warburton as his editor. A mortal hatred raged between Bolingbroke and Warburton. The philosophical Lord had seen the mighty theologian ravish the prey from his grasp. Although Pope held in idolatrous veneration the genius of Bolingbroke, yet had this literary superstition been gradually enlightened by the energy of Warburton. They were his good and his evil genii, in a dreadful conflict, wrestling to obtain the entire possession of the soul of the mortal. Bolingbroke and Warburton one day disputed before Pope, and parted never to meet again. The will of Pope bears the trace of his divided feelings: he left his MSS. to Bolingbroke as his executor, but his works to Warburton as his editor. The secret history of Bolingbroke and Warburton with Pope is little known: the note will supply it*.

But how did the puny Mallet stand connected with these great men? By the pamphlets published during this literary quarrel, he appears to have enjoyed a more intimate intercourse with them than is known. In one of them he is characterised "as a fellow who, while Mr. Pope lived, was as diligent in licking his feet, as he is now in licking your Lordship's; and who, for the sake of giving him-

* Splendid as was the genius of Bolingbroke, the gigantic force of Warburton obtained the superiority. Had the contest solely depended on the effusions of genius, Bolingbroke might have prevailed; but an object more important than human interests, induced the poet to throw himself into the arms of Warburton.

The "Essay on Man" had been reformed by the subtle aid of Warburton, in opposition to the objectionable principles which Bolingbroke had infused into his system of philosophy: this, no doubt, had vexed Bolingbroke. But another circumstance occurred of a more mortifying nature. When Pope, one day, showed Warburton Bolingbroke's "Letters on the Study and Use of History," printed, but not published, and concealing the name of the author, Warburton not only made several very free strictures on that work, but particularly attacked a digression concerning the authenticity of the Old Testament. Pope requested him to write his remarks down as they had occurred, which he instantly did; and Pope was so satisfied with them, that he crossed out the digression in the printed book, and sent the animadversions to Lord Bolingbroke, then at Paris. The style of the great dogmatist, thrown out in heat, must no doubt have contained many fiery particles, all which fell into the most inflammable of minds. Pope soon discovered his officiousness was received with indignation. Yet when Bolingbroke afterwards met Warburton he dissimulated: he used the language of compliment, but in a tone which claimed homage. The two most arrogant geniuses who ever lived, in vain exacted submission from each other: they could allow of no divided empire, and they were born to hate each other. Bolingbroke suppressed his sore feelings, for at that very time he was employed in collecting matter to refute the objections; treasuring up his secret vengeance against Pope and Warburton, which he threw out immediately on the death of Pope. I collect these particulars from Ruffhead, p. 527, and whenever, in that volume, Warburton's name is introduced, it must be considered as coming from himself.

The reasonings of Bolingbroke appear, at times, to have disturbed the religious faith of our poet; and he owed much to Warburton, in having that faith confirmed. But Pope rejected, with his characteristic good sense, Warburton's tampering with him to abjure the Catholic religion. On the belief of a future state, Pope seems often to have meditated with great anxiety; and an anecdote is recorded of his latest hours, which shows how strongly that important belief affected him. A day or two before his death he was at times delirious; and about four o'clock in the morning he rose from bed and went to the library, where a friend who was watching him found him busily writing. He persuaded him to desist, and withdrew the paper he had written. The subject of the thoughts of the delirious poet was a new theory on the Immortality of the Soul; in which he distinguished between those material objects which tended to strengthen his conviction, and those which weakened it. The paper which contained these disordered thoughts was shown to Warburton, and surely has been preserved.

self an air of importance, in being joined with you, and for the vanity of saying 'the Author and I,'—'the Editor and me,'—has sacrificed all his pretensions to friendship, honour, and humanity*." An anecdote in this pamphlet, assigns a sufficient motive to excite some wrath in a much less irritable animal than the self-important editor of Bolingbroke's Works. The anecdote may be distinguished as,

THE APOLLO VISION.

"The editor (Mallet) being in company with the person to whom Mr. Pope has consigned the care of his works (Warburton), and who, he thought, had some intention of writing Mr. Pope's life, told him he had an anecdote, which he believed nobody knew but himself. I was sitting one day (said he) with Mr. Pope, in his last illness, who coming suddenly out of a reverie, which you know he frequently fell into at that time, and fixing his eyes steadfastly upon me; 'Mr. M. (said he) I have had an odd kind of vision. Methought I saw my own head open, and Apollo came out of it; I then saw your head open, and Apollo went into it; after which our heads closed up again.' The gentleman (Warburton) could not help smiling at his vanity; and with some humour replied, 'Why, sir, if I had an intention of writing *your* life, this might perhaps be a proper anecdote; but I don't see, that in Mr. Pope's it will be of any consequence at all.'" P. 14.

This exhibits a curious instance of an author's egotism, or rather of Mallet's conceit, contriving, by some means, to have his name slide into the projected Life of Pope by Warburton, who appears, however, always to have treated him with the contempt Pope himself evidently did †. What opinion could the Poet have entertained of the taste of that weak and vain critic, who, when Pope published anonymously "The Essay on Man," being

* A letter to the Lord Viscount B——ke, occasioned by his treatment of a deceased friend. Printed for A. Moore, without date.—This pamphlet either came from Warburton himself, or from one of his intimates. The writer, too, calls Pope his friend.

† We find also the name of Mallet closely connected with another person of eminence, the Patriot-Poet, Leonidas Glover. I take this opportunity of correcting a surmise of Johnson's in his Life of Mallet, respecting Glover, and which also places Mallet's character in a true light.

A minute life of Mallet might exhibit a curious example of mediocrity of talent, with but suspicious virtues, brought forward by the accident of great connexions, placing a bustling intriguer much higher in the scale of society than "our Philosophy ever dreamt of." Johnson says of Mallet, that "It was remarkable of him, that he was the only Scot whom Scotchmen did not commend."—From having been accidentally chosen as private tutor to the Duke of Montrose, he wound himself into the favour of the party at Leicester-house; he wrote tragedies conjointly with Thomson, and was appointed, with Glover, to write the life of the Duke of Marlborough. Yet he had already shown to the world his scanty talent for Biography in his Life of Lord Bacon, on which Warburton so acutely animadverted.

According to Johnson's account, the Duchess of Marlborough assigned the task of writing the Life of the Duke to Glover and to Mallet, with a remuneration of a thousand pounds. She must, however, have mortified the poets by subjoining the sarcastic prohibition, that "no verses should be inserted." Johnson adds, "Glover, *I suppose, rejected with disdain, the Legacy*, and devolved the whole work upon Mallet."

The cause why Glover declined this work could not, indeed, be known to Johnson: it arose from a far more dignified motive, than the petty disdain of the legacy, which our great literary Biographer has surmised. It can now be told in his own words, which I derive from a very interesting extract communicated to me by my friend Mr. Duppa, from that portion of the MS. Memoirs of Glover not yet published.

I shall first quote the remarkable codicil from the original Will of her Grace, which Mr. Duppa took the pains to consult. She assigns her reasons for the choice of her historians, and discriminates between the two authors. After bequeathing the thousand pounds for them, she adds: "I believe Mr. Glover is a very honest man, who wishes, as I do, all the good that can happen, to preserve the liberties and laws of England. Mr. Mallet was recommended to me by the late duke of Montrose, whom I admired extremely for his great steadiness and behaviour in all things that related to the preservation of our laws and the public good."—Thus her Grace has expressed a personal knowledge and confidence in Glover, distinctly marked from her "recommended" acquaintance Mallet.

Glover refused the office of Historian, not from "disdain of the Legacy," nor for any deficient zeal for the hero whom he admired. He refused it with sorrowful disappointment; for, besides the fantastical restrictions of "not writing any verses;" and the cruel one of yoking such a patriot with the servile Mallet, there was one which placed the revision of the work in the hands of the Earl of Chesterfield: this was the *circumstance* at which the dignified genius of Glover

asked if anything new had appeared, replied that he had looked over a thing called an "Essay on Man," but, discovering the utter want of skill and knowledge in the author, had thrown it aside. Pope mortified him by confiding to him the secret.

"The Apollo Vision" was a stinging anecdote, and it came from Warburton either directly or indirectly. This was followed up by "A Letter to the Editor of the Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism, the Idea of a Patriot King," &c., a dignified remonstrance by Warburton himself; but "The Impostor detected and convicted, or the Principles and Practices of the Author of the Spirit of Patriotism (Lord Bolingbroke) set forth in a clear light, in a Letter to a Member of Parliament in Town, from his Friend in the Country, 1749," is a remarkable production. Lord Bolingbroke is the impostor, and the concealed Jacobite. Time, the ablest critic on these party productions, has verified the predictions of this seer. We discover here, too, a literary fact, which is necessary to complete our present history. It seems that there were omissions and corrections in the edition Pope printed of "The Patriot King," which his caution or his moderation prompted, and which such a political demagogue as Bolingbroke never forgave. They are thus alluded to: "Lord B. may remember" (from a conversation held, at which the writer appears to have been present), "that a difference in opinion prevailed, and a few points were urged by that gentleman (Pope) in opposition to some particular tenets which related to the limitation of the English monarchy, and to the ideal doctrine of a patriot king. These were Mr. P.'s reasons for the emendations he made; and which, together with the consideration, that both their lives were at that time in a declining state, was the true cause, and no other, of his care to preserve those letters, by handing them to the press, with the precaution mentioned by the author." Indeed the cry raised against the *dead man*, by Bolingbroke and Mallet, was an artificial one: that it should ever have tainted the honour of the bard, or that it should ever have been excited by his "Philosopher and Friend," are equally strange; it is possible that the malice of Mallet was more at work than that of Bolingbroke, who suffered himself to be the dupe of a man held in contempt by Pope, by Warburton, and by others. But the pamphlet I have just noticed might have enraged Bolingbroke, because his true character is ably drawn in it. The writer says, that "a person in an eminent station of life abroad, when Lord B—— was at Paris, to transact a certain

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revolted. Chesterfield's mean political character had excited his indignation; and he has drawn a lively picture of this polished nobleman's "eager prostitution," in his printed Memoirs, recently published under the title of "Memoirs of a celebrated Literary and Political Character," p. 24.

In the following passage, this great-minded man, for such he was, "unburthens his heart in a melancholy digression from his plain narrative."

"Composing such a narrative (alluding to his own Memoirs) and endeavouring to establish such a temper of mind, I cannot at intervals refrain from regret that the *capricious restrictions* in the Duchess of Marlborough's will, appointing me to write the life of her illustrious husband, compelled me to reject the undertaking. There, conduct, valour, and success abroad; prudence, perseverance, learning, and science, at home; would have shed some portion of their graces on their historian's page: a mediocrity of talent would have felt an unwonted elevation in the bare attempt of transmitting so splendid a period to succeeding ages." Such was the dignified regret of Glover!

Doubtless, he disdained, too, his colleague; but Mallet reaped the whole legacy, and still more, a pension: pretending to be always occupied on the Life of Marlborough, and every day talking of the great discoveries he had made, he contrived to make this non-entity serve his own purposes. Once hinting to Garrick, that, in spite of Chronology, by some secret device of anticipation, he had reserved a niche in this great Work for the Roscius of his own times, the gratitude of Garrick was instant. He recollected that Mallet was a Tragedy-writer; and it also appeared, that our dramatic Bardling had one ready. As for the pretended Life of Marlborough, not a line appears ever to have been written!

Such was the end of the ardent solicitude and caprice of the Duchess of Marlborough, exemplified in the last solemn act of life, where she betrayed the same warmth of passion, and the same arrogant caprice she had always indulged, at the cost of her judgment, in what Pope emphatically terms "the trade of the world." She was

"The wisest fool much time has ever made."

Even in this darling project of her last ambition, to immortalise her name, she had incumbered it with such arrogant injunctions, mixed up such contrary elements, that they were certain to undo their own purpose.—Such was the barren harvest she gathered through a life of passion, regulated by no principle of conduct. One of the most

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finished portraits of Pope is the Atossa, in his Epistle on Woman. How admirably he shows what the present instance proves, that she was one, who, always possessing the *means*, was sure to lose the *ends*.

affair, said, *C'est certainement un homme d'esprit, mais un coquin sans probité.*" This was a very disagreeable truth!

In one of these pamphlets, too, Bolingbroke was mortified at his dignity being lessened by the writer, in comparing his lordship with their late friend Pope.—"I venture to foretell, that the name of Mr. Pope, in spite of your unmanly endeavours, shall revive and blossom in the dust, from his own merits; and presume to remind you, that *yours*, had it not been for *his* genius, *his* friendship, *his* idolatrous veneration for *you*, might, in a short course of years, have died and been forgotten." Whatever the degree of genius Bolingbroke may claim, doubtless the verse of Pope has embalmed his fame.—I have never been able to discover the authors of these pamphlets, who all appear of the first rank, and who seem to have written under the eye of Warburton. The awful and vindictive Bolingbroke, and the malignant and petulant Mallet, did not long brood over their anger: he, or they, gave it vent on the head of Warburton, in those two furious pamphlets, which I have noticed in the Quarrels of Warburton, p. 176. All these pamphlets were published in the same year 1749, so that it is now difficult to arrange them according to their priority. Enough has been shown to prove, that the loud outcry of Bolingbroke and Mallet, in their posthumous attack on Pope, arose from their unforgiving malice against him, for the preference by which the poet had distinguished Warburton; and that Warburton, much more than Pope, was the real object of this masked battery.

LINTOT'S ACCOUNT-BOOK.

An odd sort of a literary curiosity has fallen in my way. It throws some light on the history of the heroes of the Dunciad; but such *minutiæ literariæ* are only for my bibliographical readers.

It is a book of accounts, which belonged to the renowned Bernard Lintot the bookseller, whose character has been so humorously preserved by Pope, in a dialogue which the poet has given as having passed between them in Windsor Forest. The book is entitled "*Copies, when Purchased.*" The power of genius is exemplified in the ledger of the bookseller as much as in any other book; and while I here discover, that the moneys received even by such men of genius as Gay, Farquhar, Cibber, and Dr. King, amount to small sums, and such authors as Dennis, Theobald, Ozell, and Toland, scarcely amount to anything, that of Pope much exceeds 4000*l.*

I am not in all cases confident of the nature of these "Copies purchased;" those works which were originally published by Lintot may be considered as purchased at the sums specified: some few might have been subsequent to their first edition. The guinea, at that time, passing for twenty-one shillings and sixpence, has occasioned the fractions.

I transcribe Pope's account. Here it appears that he sold "The Key to the Lock" and "Parnell's Poems." The poem entitled "To the Author of a Poem called *Successio*," appears to have been written by Pope, and has escaped the researches of his editors. The smaller poems were contributions to a volume of Poetical Miscellanies, published by Lintot*.

MR. POPE.

	£	s.	d.
19 *Feb.* 1711-12.			
Statius, First Book . . . . . } Vertumnus and Pomona . . . }	16	2	6
21 *March*, 1711-12.			
First Edition Rape	7	0	0
9 *April*, 1712.			
To a Lady presenting Voiture . . } Upon Silence . . . . . } To the Author of a Poem called *Successio* . . . . . }	3	16	6
23 *Feb.* 1712-13.			
Windsor Forest	32	5	0
23 *July*, 1713.			
Ode on St. Cecilia's Day . . .	15	0	0
20 *Feb.* 1713-14.			
Additions to the Rape	15	0	0
1 *Feb.* 1714-15.			
Temple of Fame	32	5	0
30 *April*, 1715.			
Key to the Lock	10	15	0

* "Miscellaneous Poems and Translations, by several Hands, 1712."—The second edition appeared in 1714; and in the title-page are enumerated the poems mentioned in this account, and Pope's name affixed, as if he were the actual editor—an idea which Mr. Nichols thought he affected to discountenance. It is probable that Pope was the editor. We see, by this account, that he was paid for his contributions.

	£	s.	d.
17 *July*, 1716.			
Essay on Criticism*	15	0	0
13 *Dec.* 1721.			
Parnell's Poems	15	0	0
23 *March*, 1713.			
Homer, vol. i.	215	0	0
650 books on royal paper . .	176	0	0
9 *Feb.* 1715-16.			
Homer, vol. ii.	215	0	0
7 *May*, 1716.			
650 royal paper	150	0	0
This article is repeated to the sixth volume of Homer. To which is to be added another sum of 840*l.*, paid for an assignment of all the copies. The whole of this part of the account amounting to	3203	4	0
Copy-moneys for the Odyssey, vols. i. ii. iii., and 750 of each vol. royal paper, 4to.	615	6	0
Ditto for the vols. iv. v. and 750 do.	425	18	7½
	£4244	8	7½

MR. GAY.

	£	s.	d.
12 *May*, 1713.			
Wife of Bath	25	0	0
11 *Nov.* 1714.			
Letter to a Lady	5	7	6
14 *Feb.* 1714.			
The What d'ye call it?	16	2	6
22 *Dec.* 1715.			
Trivia	43	0	0
Epistle to the Earl of Burlington .	10	15	0
4 *May*, 1717.			
Battle of the Frogs	16	2	6
8 *Jan.* 1717.			
Three Hours after Marriage . . .	43	2	6
The Mohocks, a Farce, 2*l.* 10*s.* (Sold the Mohocks to him again†.)			
Revival of the Wife of Bath . . .	75	0	0
	£234	10	0

MR. DENNIS.

	£	s.	d.
Feb. 24, 1703-4.			
Liberty Asserted, one half share‡ .	7	3	0
10 *Nov.* 1708.			
Appius and Virginia	21	10	0
25 *April*, 1711.			
Essay on Public Spirit	2	12	6
6 *Jan.* 1711.			
Remarks on Pope's Essay . . .	2	12	6

Dennis must have sold himself to criticism from ill-nature, and not for pay. One is surprised that his two tragedies should have been worth a great deal more than his criticism. Criticism was then worth no more than too frequently it deserves; Dr. Sewel, for his "Observations on the Tragedy of Jane Shore," received only a guinea.

I had suggested a doubt whether Theobald attempted to translate from the original Greek: one would suppose he did by the following entry, which has a line drawn through it, as if the agreement had not been executed. Perhaps Lintot submitted to pay Theobald for *not doing* the Odyssey when Pope undertook it.

MR. THEOBALD.

	£	s.	d.
23 *May*, 1713.			
Plato's Phædon	5	7	6
For *Æsculus's* Trag. . . . . being part of Ten Guineas.	1	1	6
12 *June*, 1714.			
La Motte's Homer	3	4	6

April 21, 1714. Articles signed by Mr. Theobald, to translate for B. Lintot the 24 Books of Homer's Odyssey into English blank verse. Also the four Tragedies of Sophocles, called Œdipus Tyrannus, Œdipus Coloneus, Trachiniæ, and Philoctetes, into English blank verse, with Explanatory Notes to the twenty-four Books of the

* This was a new edition, published conjointly by Lintot and Lewis the Catholic bookseller and early friend of Pope, of whom, and of the first edition, 1711, I have preserved an anecdote, p. 180.

† The late Isaac Reed, in the Biog. Dramatica, was uncertain whether Gay was the author of this unacted Drama. It is a satire on the inhuman frolics of the bucks and bloods of those days, who imitated the savageness of the Indians whose name they assumed. Why Gay repurchased "the Mohocks," remains to be discovered. Was it another joint production with Pope?—The literary co-partnership between Pope and Gay has never been opened to the curious. It is probable that Pope was consulted, if not concerned, in writing "The What d'ye call it?" which, Jacob says in his 'Poetical Register,' "exposes several of our eminent poets." Jacob published while Gay was living, and seems to allude to this literary co-partnership; for, speaking of Gay, he says: "that having an inclination to poetry, by the strength of his own genius, and the *conversation* of Mr. Pope, he has made some progress in poetical writings."

This tragi-comical farce of "The Mohocks" is satirically dedicated to Dennis, "as a *horrid* and *tremendous* piece, formed on the model of his own 'Appius and Virginia.'" This touch seems to come from the finger of Pope. It is a mock-tragedy, for the Mohocks themselves rant in blank-verse; a feeble performance, far inferior to its happier predecessor, "The What d'ye call it?"

‡ Bought of Mr. George Strahan, bookseller.

Odyssey, and to the four Tragedies. To receive, for translating every 450 Greek verses, with Explanatory Notes thereon, the sum of 2*l.* 10*s.*

To translate likewise the Satires and Epistles of Horace into English rhyme. For every 120 Latin lines so translated, the sum of 1*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*

These Articles to be performed, according to the time specified, under the penalty of fifty pounds, payable by either party's default in performance.

Paid in hand, 2*l.* 10*s.*

It appears that Toland never got above 5*l.*, 10*l.*, or 20*l.*, for his publications. See his article in "Calamities of Authors," p. 118. I discovered the humiliating conditions that attended his publications, from an examination of his original papers. All this author seems to have reaped from a life devoted to literary enterprise, and philosophy, and patriotism, appears not to have exceeded 200*l.*!

Here, too, we find that the facetious Dr. King threw away all his sterling wit for five miserable pounds, though "The Art of Cookery," and that of "Love," obtained a more honourable price. But a mere school-book, probably, inspired our lively genius with more real facetiousness than any of those works which communicate so much to others.

DR. KING.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
18 *Feb.* 1707-8			
Paid for Art of Cookery	32	5	0
16 *Feb.* 1708-9.			
Paid for the First Part of Transactions	5	0	0
Paid for his Art of Love	32	5	0
23 *June*, 1709.			
Paid for the 2d Part of the Transactions*	5	0	0
4 *March*, 1709-10.			
Paid for the History of Cajamai . .	5	0	0
10 *Nov.* 1710.			
Paid for King's Gods	50	0	0
1 *July*, 1712.			
Useful Miscellany, Part I.	1	1	6
Paid for the Useful Miscellany . . .	3	0	0

Lintot utters a groan over "The Duke of Buckingham's Works" (Sheffield), for "having been *jockeyed* of them by Alderman Barber and Tonson." Who can ensure literary celebrity? No bookseller would *now* regret being *jockeyed* out of his grace's works!

The history of plays appears here somewhat curious:—tragedies, then the fashionable dramas, obtained a considerable price; for though Dennis's luckier one reached only to 21*l.*, Dr. Young's "Busiris" acquired 84*l.* Smith's "Phædra and Hippolytus," 50*l.*; Rowe's "Jane Shore," 50*l.* 15*s.*; and "Jane Gray," 75*l.* 5*s.* Cibber's "Nonjuror" obtained 105*l.* for the copyright.

Is it not a little mortifying to observe, that among all these customers of genius whose names enrich the ledger of the bookseller, Jacob, that "blunderbuss of law," while his law-books occupy in space as much as Mr. Pope's works, the amount of his account stands next in value, far beyond many a name which has immortalised itself!

* For an account of these humorous pieces, see the following article of "The Royal Society."

POPE'S EARLIEST SATIRE.

We find by the first edition of Lintot's "Miscellaneous Poems," that the anonymous lines "To the Author of a Poem called *Successio*," was a literary satire by Pope, written when he had scarcely attained his fourteenth year. This satire, the first probably he wrote for the press, and in which he has succeeded so well, that it might have induced him to pursue the bent of his genius, merits preservation. The juvenile composition bears the marks of his future excellences: it has the tune of his verse, and the images of his wit. Thirty years afterwards, when occupied by the Dunciad, he transplanted and pruned again some of the original images.

The hero of this satire is Elkanah Settle. The subject is one of those Whig poems, designed to celebrate the happiness of an uninterrupted "Succession" in the Crown, at the time the Act of Settlement passed, which transferred it to the Hanoverian line. The rhymer and his theme were equally contemptible to the juvenile Jacobite poet.

The hoarse and voluminous Codrus of Juvenal aptly designates this eternal verse-maker;—one who has written with such constant copiousness, that no bibliographer has presumed to form a complete list of his works *.

When Settle had outlived his temporary rival-

* The fullest account we have of Settle, a busy scribe in his day, is in Mr. Nichols's Lit. Anec. vol. i. p. 41.

ship with Dryden, and was reduced to mere Settle, he published party-poems, in folio, composed in Latin, accompanied by his own translations. These folio poems, uniformly bound, except that the arms of his patrons, or rather his purchasers, richly gilt, emblazon the black morocco, may still be found. These presentation-copies were sent round to the chiefs of the party, with a mendicant's petition, of which some still exist. To have a clear conception of the *present views* of some politicians, it is necessary to read their history backwards. In 1702, when Settle published "Successio," he must have been a Whig. In 1685 he was a Tory, commemorating, by an heroic poem, the coronation of James II., and writing periodically against the Whigs. In 1680, he had left the Tories for the Whigs, and conducted the whole management of burning the pope, then a very solemn national ceremony. A Whig, a pope-burner, and a Codrus, afforded a full draught of inspiration to the nascent genius of our youthful satirist.

Settle, in his latter state of wretchedness, had one standard *elegy* and *epithalamium* printed off with *blanks*. By the ingenious contrivance of inserting the name of any considerable person who died or was married, no one, who had gone out of the world, or was entering into it, but was equally welcome to this dinnerless livery-man of the draggled-tailed Muses. I have elsewhere noticed his last exit from this state of poetry and of pauperism; when, leaping into a green dragon, which his own creative genius had invented, in a theatrical booth, Codrus, in hissing flames and terrifying-morocco folds, discovered "the fate of talents misapplied!"

TO THE AUTHOR OF A POEM ENTITLED "SUCCESSIO."

Begone, ye critics, and restrain your spite;
Codrus writes on, and will for ever write.
The heaviest Muse the swiftest course has gone,
As clocks run fastest when most lead is on *.
What though no bees around your cradle flew,
Nor on your lips distill'd their golden dew;
Yet have we oft discover'd in their stead,
A swarm of drones that buzz'd about your head.
When you, like Orpheus, strike the warbling lyre,
Attentive blocks stand round you, and admire.
Wit past through thee no longer is the same,
As meat digested takes a different name†;
But sense must sure thy safest plunder be,
Since no reprisals can be made on thee.
Thus thou mayst rise, and in thy daring flight
(Though ne'er so weighty) reach a wondrous height:
So, forced from engines, lead itself can fly,
And pond'rous slugs move nimbly through the sky‡.
Sure Bavius copied Mævius to the full,
And Chærilus§ taught Codrus to be dull;
Therefore, dear friend, at my advice give o'er
This needless labour, and contend no more
To prove a *dull Succession* to be true,
Since 'tis enough we find it so in you.

* Thus altered in the Dunciad, book i., ver. 183.

"As clocks to weight their nimble motions owe,
The wheels above urged by the load below."

† This original image a late caustic wit (Horne Tooke), who probably had never read this poem, employed on a certain occasion. Godwin, who had then distinguished himself by his genius and by some hardy paradoxes, was pleading for them as hardily, by showing that they did not originate in him—that they were to be found in Helvetius, in Rousseau, and in other modern philosophers. "Ay," retorted the cynical wit; "so you eat at my table venison and turtle, but from you the same things come quite changed!" The original, after all, is in Donne, long afterwards versified by our poet. See Warton's edition, vol. iv., p. 257. Pope must have been an early reader of Donne.

‡ Thus altered in the Dunciad, book i. ver. 181.

"As, forced from wind-guns, lead itself can fly,
And pond'rous slugs cut swiftly through the sky."

§ Perhaps, by *Chærilus*, the juvenile satirist designed *Flecknoe*, or *Shadwell*, who had received their immortality of dulness from his master, catholic in poetry and opinions, Dryden.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY at first opposed from various quarters—their Experimental Philosophy supplants the Aristotelian Methods—suspected of being the concealed Advocates of Popery, Arbitrary Power, and Atheism—disappointments incurred by their promises—the simplicity of the early Inquirers—ridiculed by the Wits and others—Narrative of a quarrel between a Member of the Royal Society and an Aristotelian—Glanvill writes his "Plus Ultra," to show the Improvements of Modern Knowledge — Character of Stubbe of Warwick—his Apology, from himself—opposes the "Plus Ultra" by the "Plus Ultra reduced to a Nonplus"—his "Campanella revived"—the Political Projects of Campanella—Stubbe persecuted, and menaced to be publicly whipped; his Roman spirit—his "Legends no Histories"—his "Censure on some Passages of the History of the Royal Society"—Harvey's ambition to be considered the Discoverer of the Circulation of the Blood, which he demonstrated—Stubbe describes the Philosophy of Science—attacks Sprat's Dedication to the King—The Philosophical Transactions published by Sir Hans Sloane ridiculed by Dr. King—his new Species of Literary Burlesque—King's character—these attacks not ineffectually renewed by Sir John Hill.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY, on its first establishment, at the era of the Restoration, encountered fierce hostilities; nor, even at later periods, has it escaped many wanton attacks. A great revolution in the human mind was opening with that establishment; for the spirit which had appeared in the recent political concussion, and which had given freedom to opinion, and a bolder scope to enterprise, had now reached the literary and philosophical world; but causes of the most opposite natures operated against this institution of infant science.

In the first place, the new experimental philosophy, full of inventions and operations, proposed to supplant the old scholastic philosophy, which still retained an obscure jargon of terms, the most frivolous subtilties, and all those empty and artificial methods by which it pretended to decide on all topics. Too long it had filled the ear with airy speculation, while it starved the mind that languished for sense and knowledge. But this emancipation menaced the power of the followers of Aristotle, who were still slumbering in their undisputed authority, enthroned in our Universities. For centuries, the world had been taught that the philosopher of Stagira had thought on every subject: Aristotle was quoted as equal authority with St. Paul, and his very image has been profanely looked on with the reverence paid to Christ. BACON had fixed a new light in Europe, and others were kindling their torches at his flame. When the great usurper of the human understanding was once fairly opposed to Nature, he betrayed too many symptoms of mere humanity. Yet this great triumph was not obtained without severe contention; and upon the Continent, even blood has been shed in the cause of words. In our country, the University of Cambridge was divided by a party who called themselves *Trojans*, from their antipathy to the *Greeks*, or the Aristotelians; and once the learned Richard Harvey, the brother of Gabriel, the friend of Spenser, stung to madness by the predominant powers, to their utter dismay set up their idol on the school-gates, with his heels upwards, and ass's ears on his head. But at this later period, when the Royal Society was established, the war was more open, and both parties more inveterate. Now the world seemed to think, so violent is the re-action of public opinion, that they could reason better without Aristotle than with him: that he had often taught them nothing more than self-evident propositions, or had promoted that dangerous idleness of maintaining paradoxes, by quibbles, and other captious subtilties. The days had closed of the "illuminated," the "profound," and the "irrefragable," titles, which the scholastic heroes had obtained; and the Aristotelian four modes, by which all things in nature must exist, of *materialiter*, *formaliter*, *fundamentaliter*, and

eminenter, were now considered as nothing more than the noisy rattles, or chains of cherry-stones, which had too long detained us in the nursery of the human mind*. The world had been cheated with words instead of things; and the new experimental philosophy insisted that men should be less loquacious, but more laborious.

Some there were, in that unsettled state of politics and religion, in whose breasts the embers of the late Revolution were still hot: they were panic-struck, that the advocates of popery and arbitrary power were returning on them, disguised as natural philosophers. This new terror had a very ludicrous origin:—it arose from some casual expressions, in which the Royal Society at first delighted, and by which an air of mystery was thrown over its secret movements: such was that "Universal Correspondence" which it affected to boast of; and the vaunt to foreigners of its "Ten Secretaries," when, in truth, all these magnificent declarations were only objects of their wishes. Another fond but singular expression, which the illustrious Boyle had frequently applied to it in its earliest state, when only composed of a few friends, calling it "The Invisible College," all concurred to make the Royal Society wear the appearance of a conspiracy against the political freedom of the nation. At a time too, when, according to the historian of the Royal Society, "almost every family was widely disagreed among themselves on matters of religion," they believed that this "new experimental philosophy was subversive of the Christian faith†!" and many mortally hated the newly-invented optical glasses, the telescope and the microscope, as atheistical inventions, which perverted our sight, and made everything appear in a new and false light! Sprat wrote his celebrated "History of the Royal Society," to show that experimental philosophy was neither designed for the extinction of

* Some may be curious to have these monkish terms defined. *Causes* are distinguished, by Aristotle, into four kinds: — The material cause, *ex qua*, out of which things are made; the formal cause, *per quam*, by which a thing is that which it is, and nothing else; the efficient cause, *a qua*, by the agency of which anything is produced; and the final cause, *propter quam*, the end for which it is produced. Such are his notions in his Phys. l. ii. c. iii. referred to by Brucker and Formey, in their Histories of Philosophy. Of the Scholastic Metaphysics, *Sprat*, the historian of the Royal Society, observes, "that the lovers of that cloudy knowledge boast that it is an excellent instrument to refine and make subtle the minds of men. But there may be *a greater excess in the subtlety of men's wits* than in their *thickness*; as we see those threads, which are of too fine a spinning, are found to be more useless than those which are homespun and gross." *Hist. of the Royal Soc.* p. 326.

In the history of human folly, often so closely connected with that of human knowledge, some of the schoolmen (the commentators on Aquinas and others) prided themselves, and were even admired for their impenetrable obscurity! One of them, and our countryman, is singularly commended by Cardan, for that "only one of his arguments was enough to puzzle all posterity; and that, when he had grown old, he wept because he could not understand his own books." Baker, in his Reflections upon Learning, who had examined this schoolman, declares his obscurity is such, as if he never meant to be understood. The extravagances of the schoolmen are, however, not always those of Aristotle. Pope, and the wits of that day, like these early members of the Royal Society, decried Aristotle, who did not probably fall in the way of their studies. His great imperfections are in natural philosophy; but he still preserves his eminence for his noble treatises of Ethics and Politics, and Poetics, notwithstanding the imperfect state in which these have reached us. Dr. Copleston and Dr. Gillies have given an energetic testimony to their perpetual value. Pope, in satirising the University as a nest of dunces, considered the followers of Aristotle as so many stalled oxen, "*fat bulls of Basan*,"

"A hundred head of Aristotle's friends."

Dunciad.

Swift has drawn an allegorical personage of Aristotle, by which he describes the nature of his works. "He stooped much, and made use of a staff; his visage was meagre, his hair lank and thin, and his voice hollow;" descriptive of his abrupt conciseness, his harsh style, the obscurities of his dilapidated text, and the deficiency of feeling, which his studied compression, his deep sagacity, and his analytical genius, so frequently exhibit.

† Sprat makes an ingenious observation on the notion of those who declared that "*the most learned ages are still the most atheistical, and the ignorant the most devout.*" He says this had become almost proverbial, but he shows that piety is little beholden to those who make this distinction. "The Jewish law forbids us to offer up to God a sacrifice that has a blemish; but these men bestow the most excellent of men on the devil, and only assign to religion those men and those times which have the greatest blemish of human nature, even a defect in their knowledge and understanding."—*History of the Royal Society*, p. 356.

the Universities, nor of the Christian religion, which were really imagined to be in danger.

Others, again, were impatient for romantic discoveries; miracles were required, some were hinted at, while some were promised. In the ecstacy of imagination, they lost their soberness, forgetting they were but the historians of nature, and not her prophets*. But amid these dreams of hope and fancy, the creeping experimentalist was still left boasting of improvements, so slow that they were not perceived, and of novelties so absurd that they too often raised the laugh against their grave and unlucky discoverers. The philosophers themselves seemed to have been fretted into the impatient humour which they attempted to correct; and the amiable Evelyn becomes an irritated satirist, when he attempts to reply to the repeated question of that day, "What have they done†?"

But a source of the ridicule which was perpetually flowing against the Royal Society, was the almost infantine simplicity of its earliest members, led on by their honest zeal; and the absence of all discernment in many trifling and ludicrous researches, which called down the malice of the wits‡; there was, too, much of that unjust con-

* Science, at its birth, is as much the child of imagination as curiosity; and, in rapture at the new instrument it has discovered, it impatiently magnifies its power. To the infant, all improvements are wonders; it chronicles even its dreams, and has often described what it never has seen, delightfully deceived; the cold insults of the cynics, the wits, the dull, and the idle, maliciously mortify the infant in its sports, till it returns to slow labour and patient observation. It is rather curious, however, that when science obtains a certain state of maturity, it is liable to be attacked by the same fits of the marvellous which affected its infancy;—and the following extract from one of the enthusiastic *Virtuosi* in the infancy of science, rivals the visions of "the perfectibility of man," of which we hear so much at this late period. Some, perhaps, may consider these strong tendencies of the imagination, breaking out at these different periods in the history of science, to indicate results, of which the mind feels a consciousness, which the philosopher should neither indulge nor check.

"Should these heroes go on (the Royal Society) as they have happily begun, they will fill the world with wonders; and posterity will find many things that are now but *rumours*, verified into practical *realities*. It may be, some ages hence, a *voyage* to the southern unknown tracts, yea, possibly the *Moon*, will not be more strange than one to America. To them that come after us, it may be as ordinary to *buy a pair of wings* to fly into remotest regions, as now *a pair of boots* to ride a journey. And to confer at the distance of the Indies, by *sympathetic conveyances*, may be as usual to future times, as to us in a literary correspondence. The restoration of *grey hairs to juvenility*, and renewing the *exhausted marrow*, may at length be effected without a miracle; and the turning the now comparative *desert world* into a *paradise*, may not improbably be expected from late *agriculture*.

"Those that judge by the narrowness of former principles and successes, will smile at these paradoxical expectations. But the great inventions of latter ages, which altered the face of all things, in their naked proposals and mere suppositions, were to former times as ridiculous. To have talked of a new earth to have been discovered, had been a romance to antiquity; and to sail without sight of stars or shores, by the guidance of a mineral, a story more absurd than the flight of Dædalus. That men should speak after their tongues were ashes, or communicate with each other in differing hemispheres, before the invention of letters, could not but have been thought a fiction. Antiquity would not have believed the almost incredible force of our cannons, and would as coldly have entertained the wonders of the telescope."—GLANVILL, *Scepsis Scientifica*, p. 133.

† Evelyn, whose elegant mind, one would have imagined, had been little susceptible of such vehement anger, in the preface to his "Sylva," scolds at no common rate: "Well-meaning people are led away by the noise of a few ignorant and comical buffoons, who, with an insolence suitable to their understanding, are still crying out, *What have the Society done?*" He attributes all the opposition and ridicule the Society encountered, to a personage, not usual to introduce into a philosophical controversy—"the Enemy of Mankind." But it was well to denounce the devil himself, as the Society had nearly lost the credit of fearing him. Evelyn insists that "next to the propagation of our most holy faith," that of the new philosophy was desirable both for the king and the nation; "for," he adds, "it will survive the triumphs of the proudest conquerors; since, when all their pomp and noise is ended, they are those *little things in black*, whom now in scorn they term philosophers and fops, to whom they must be obliged for making their names outlast the pyramids, whose founders are as unknown as the heads of Nile."—Why Evelyn designates the philosophers as *little things in black*, requires explanation. Did they affect a dress of this colour in the reign of Charles II., or does he allude to the dingy appearance of the chemists?

‡ It is not easy to credit the simplicity of these

tempt between the parties, which students of opposite pursuits and tastes so liberally bestow on each other. The researches of the Antiquarian

early inquirers. In a Memorial in Sprat's History, entitled, "Answers returned by Sir Philliberto Vernatti to certain Inquiries sent by order of the Royal Society;" among some of the most extraordinary questions and descriptions of non-entities, which must have fatigued Sir Philliberto, who then resided in Batavia, I find the present:—"Qy. 8. What ground there may be for that relation concerning *horns taking root, and growing about God?*" It seems the question might as well have been asked at London, and answered by some of the members themselves; for Sir Philliberto gravely replied—"Inquiring about this, a friend laughed, and told me it was a jeer put upon the Portuguese, because the women of Goa are counted none of the chastest." Inquiries of this nature, and often the most trivial objects set off with a singular minuteness of description, tempted the laugh of the scoffers. Their great adversary Stubbe, ridiculing their mode of giving instructions for inquiries, regrets that the paper he received from them had been lost, otherwise he would have published it. "The great Mr. Boyle, when he brought it, tendered it with blushing and disorder," at the simplicity of the Royal Society! And indeed the royal founder himself, who, if he was something of a philosopher, was much more of a wit, set the example. The Royal Society, on the day of its creation, was the whetstone of the wit of their patron. When Charles II. dined with the members on the occasion of constituting them a Royal Society, towards the close of the evening he expressed his satisfaction in being the first English monarch who had laid a foundation for a society who proposed that their sole studies should be directed to the investigation of the arcana of nature; and added, with that peculiar gravity of countenance he usually wore on such occasions, that among such learned men he now hoped for a solution to a question which had long perplexed him. The case he thus stated: "Suppose two pails of water were fixed in two different scales that were equally poised, and which weighed equally alike, and that two live bream, or small fish, were put into either of these pails, he wanted to know the reason why that pail, with such addition, should not weigh more than the other pail which stood against it."—Every one was ready to set at quiet the royal curiosity; but it appeared that every one was giving a different opinion. One, at length, offered so ridiculous a solution, that another of the members could not refrain from a loud laugh; when the King, turning to his insisted, that he should give his sentiments as

Society were sneered at by the Royal, and the antiquaries avenged themselves by their obstinate incredulity at the prodigies of the naturalists; the student of classical literature was equally slighted by the new philosophers; who, leaving the study of words and the elegances of rhetoric, for the study merely of things, declared as the cynical ancient did of metaphors, "poterimus vivere sine illis"—We can do very well without them!—The ever-witty South, in his oration at Oxford, made this poignant reflection on the Royal Society:—"Mirantur nihil nisi pulices, pediculos, et seipsos"—They can admire nothing except fleas, lice, and themselves!—And even Hobbes so little comprehended the utility of these new pursuits, that he considered the Royal Society merely as so many labourers, who, when they had washed their hands after their work, should leave to others the polishing of their discourses. He classed them, in the way they were proceeding, with apothecaries, and gardeners, and mechanics, who might now "all put in for, and get the prize." Even at a later period, Sir William Temple imagined the virtuosi to be only so many Sir Nicholas Gimcracks; and contemptuously called them, from the place of their first meeting, "the Men of Gresham!" doubtless considering them as wise as "the Men of Gotham!" Even now, men of other tempers and other studies, are too apt to refuse the palm of philosophy to the patient race of naturalists. Wotton, who wrote so zealously at the commencement of the last century in favour of modern knowledge, is alarmed lest the effusions of wit, in his time, should "deaden the industry of the philosophers of the next age; for," he adds, "nothing wounds so effectually as a jest; and when men once become ridiculous, their labours will be slighted, and they will find few imitators." The alarm shows his zeal, but not his discernment: since curiosity in hidden causes is a passion which endures with human nature. "The philosophers of the next age" have shown themselves as persevering as their predecessors, and the wits as malicious. The contest between men of meditation and men of experiment, is a very ancient quarrel; and the "divine" Socrates was no friend to, and even a ridiculer of, those very pursuits for which the Royal Society was established*.

well as the rest. This he did without hesitation; and told his Majesty, in plain terms, that he denied the fact!—On which the King, in high mirth, exclaimed, "Odds fish, brother, you are in the right!"—The jest was not ill designed. The story was often useful, to cool the enthusiasm of the scientific visionary, who is apt often to account for what never has existed.

* Evelyn, who could himself be a wit occasionally,

In founding this infant empire of knowledge, a memorable literary war broke out between Glanvill, the author of the treatise on "Witches," &c., and Stubbe, a physician, a man of great genius. It is the privilege of genius that its controversies enter into the history of the human mind; what is but temporary among the vulgar of mankind, with the curious and the intelligent become monuments of lasting interest. The present contest, though the spark of contention flew out of a private quarrel, at length blazed into a public controversy.

The obscure individual who commenced the fray, is forgotten in the boasted achievements of his more potent ally: he was a clergyman named Cross, the Vicar of Great Chew, in Somersetshire, a stanch Aristotelian.

Glanvill, a member of the Royal Society, and an enthusiast for the new philosophy, had kindled the anger of the Peripatetic, who was his neighbour, and who had the reputation of being the invincible disputant of his county. Some, who had in vain contended with Glanvill, now contrived to inveigle the modern philosopher into an interview with this redoubted champion.

When Glanvill entered the house, he perceived that he was to begin an acquaintance in a quarrel, which was not the happiest way to preserve it. The Vicar of Great Chew sat amid his congregated admirers. The Peripatetic had promised them the annihilation of the new-fashioned virtuoso, and, like an angry boar, had already been preluding by whetting his tusks. Scarcely had the first cold civilities passed, when Glanvill found himself involved in single combat with an assailant armed with the ten categories of Aristotle. Cross, with his *Quodam modo*, and his *Modo quodam*, with his *Ubi* and his *Quando*, scattered the ideas of the simple Experimentalist, who, confining himself to a simple recital of *facts* and a description of *things*, was referring, not to the logic of Aristotle, but to the works of nature. The imperative Aristotelian was wielding weapons, which, says Glanvill, "were nothing more than like those of a cudgel-player, or fencing-master *."

was however much annoyed by the scorners. He applies to these wits a passage in Nehemiah ii. 19, which describes those who laughed at the *builders of Jerusalem*. "These are the Sanballats, the Horonites, who disturb our men upon the wall; but *let us rise up and build!*" He describes these Horonites of wit as "magnificent fops, whose talents reach but to the adjusting of their perukes." But the Royal Society was attacked from other quarters, which ought to have assisted them. Evelyn, in his valuable treatise on forest-trees, had inserted a new project for making cider; and Stubbe insisted, that in consequence "much cider had been spoiled within these three years, by following the directions published by the commands of the Royal Society."—They afterwards announced, that they never considered themselves as answerable for their own memoirs; which gave Stubbe occasion to boast, that he had forced them to deny what they had written. A passage in Hobbes's "Considerations upon his Reputation, &c." is as remarkable for the force of its style as for that of sense, and may be applicable to *some* at this day, notwithstanding the progress of science, and the importance attached to their busy idleness.

"Every man that hath spare money can get furnaces, and buy coals. Every man that hath spare money can be at the charge of making great moulds, &c., and so may have the best and greatest telescopes. They can get engines made, recipients made, and try conclusions: but they are never the more philosophers for all this. 'Tis laudable to bestow money on curious or useful delights, but that is none of the praises of a philosopher." P. 53.

* The ninth chapter in the "Plùs Ultra," entitled "The Credit of Optic Glasses vindicated against a disputing man, who is afraid to believe his eyes against Aristotle," gives one of the ludicrous incidents of this philosophical visit. The disputer raised a whimsical objection against the science of optics; insisting that the newly-invented glasses, the telescope, the microscope, &c. were all deceitful and fallacious: for, said the Aristotelian, "take two spectacles, use them at the same time, and you will not see so well as with one singly—*ergo*, your microscopes and telescopes are impostors." How this was forced into a syllogism does not appear; but still the conclusion ran, "We can see better through one pair than two, therefore all perspectives are fallacious!"

One proposition for sense,
And t'other for convenience,

will make a tolerable syllogism for a logician in despair. The Aristotelian was however somewhat puzzled, by a problem which he had himself raised: "Why we cannot see with two pair of spectacles better than with one singly?" for the man of axioms observed, "*Vis unita fortior*," "United strength *is stronger*." It is curious enough, in the present day, to observe the sturdy Aristotelian denying these discoveries, and the praises of optics, and "the new glasses," by Glanvill.—"If this philosopher (says the member of the Royal Society) has spared some of those thoughts to the profitable doctrine of optics, which he hath spent upon *genus* and *species*, we had never heard of this objection." And he replies to the paradox which the Aristotelian had raised, by "Why cannot he write bette

The last blow was still reserved, when Cross asserted that Aristotle had more opportunities to acquire knowledge than the Royal Society, or all the present age had, or could have, for this definitive reason, "because Aristotle did, *totam peragrare Asiam.*" Besides, in the Chew philosophy, where novelty was treason, improvements or discoveries could never exist. Here the Aristotelian made his stand; and at length, gently hooking Glanvill between the horns of a dilemma, the entrapped virtuoso threw himself into an unguarded affirmation: at which the vicar of Great Chew, shouting in triumph, with a Sardonic grin, declared that Glanvill, and his Royal Society, had now avowed themselves to be atheistical! This made an end of the interview, and a beginning of the quarrel*.

Glanvill addressed an expostulatory letter to the inhuman Aristotelian, who only replied by calling it a recantation, asserting that the affair had finished with the conviction.

On this, Glanvill produced his "Plus Ultra†,"

with *two pens* than with a *single one*, since *Vis unita fortior*? When he hath answered this *Quære*, he hath resolved his own. The reason he gave why it should be so, is the reason why 'tis not."—Such are the squabbles of infantine science, which cannot as yet discover causes, although it has ascertained effects.

* This appears in chap. xviii. of the "Plus Ultra." With great simplicity Glanvill relates:—"At this period of the conference, the disputer lost all patience, and with sufficient spite and rage told me, 'that I was an atheist! That he had indeed desired my acquaintance, but would have no more on't;' and so turned his back and went away, giving me time only to answer, that 'I had no great reason to lament the loss of an acquaintance, that could be so easily forfeited.'" The following chapter vindicates the Royal Society from the charge of atheism! to assure the world they were not to be ranked "among the black conspirators against Heaven!" We see the same objections again occurring in the modern system of geology.

† This book was so scarce in 1757, that the writer in the Biographia Britannica observes, that this "small, but elegant treatise, is still very much esteemed by the curious, being become so scarce as not to be met with in other hands." Oldys, in 1738, had, in his "British Librarian," selected this work among the scarce and valuable books of which he has presented us with so many useful analyses.

The history of books is often curious. At one period a book is scarce and valuable, and at another is neither one nor the other. This does not always depend on the caprice of the public, or on the modern improvements of knowledge. The quaint title referred to that Asian argument which placed the boundaries of knowledge at the ancient limits fixed by Aristotle, like the pillars of Hercules, on which was inscribed *Ne plus ultra*, to mark the extremity of the world. But Glanvill asserted we might advance still further—*plus ultra!* To this book the Aristotelian replied with such rancour, that he could not obtain a licence for the invective either at Oxford or London. Glanvill contrived to get some extracts, and printed a small number of copies for his friends, under the sarcastic title of "The Chew Gazette;" a curiosity, we are told, of literary scolding, and which might now, among literary trinkets, fetch a Roxburgh prize.

Cross, maddened that he could not get his bundle of peripatetic ribaldries printed, wrote ballads, which he got sung as it chanced. But suppressed invectives and eking rhymes could but ill appease so fierce a mastiff: he set on the poor F. R. S. an animal as rabid, but more vigorous than himself—both of them strangely prejudiced against the modern improvements of knowledge; so that, like mastiffs in the dark, they were only the fiercer.

This was Dr. Henry Stubbe, a physician of Warwick—one of those ardent and versatile characters, strangely made up of defects as strongly marked as their excellences. He was one of those authors who, among their numerous remains, leave little of permanent value; for their busy spirits too keenly delight in temporary controversies; and they waste the efforts of a mind on their own age, which else had made the next their own. Careless of worldly opinions, these extraordinary men, with the simplicity of children, are mere beings of sensation; perpetually precipitated by their feelings, with slight powers of reflection, and just as sincere when they act in contradiction to themselves, as when they act in contradiction to others. In their moral habits, therefore, we are often struck with strange contrasts; their whole life is a jumble of actions; and we are apt to condemn their versatility of principles as arising from dishonest motives; yet their temper has often proved more generous, and their integrity purer, than those who have crept up in one unvarying progress to an eminence which they quietly possess, without any of the ardour of these original, perhaps whimsical, minds. The most tremendous menace, to a man of this class, would

what may be called literary fashions. Glanvill's "Plus Ultra" is probably now of easy occurrence; like a prophecy fully completed, the uncertain event being verified, the prophet has ceased to be remembered.

be to threaten to write the history of his life and opinions. When Stubbe attacked the Royal Society, this threat was held out against him. But menaces never startled his intrepid genius; he roved in all his wild greatness; and, always occupied more by present views than interested by the past events of his life, he cared little for his consistency in the high spirit of his independence.

The extraordinary character of Stubbe produced as uncommon a history. Stubbe had originally been a child of fortune, picked up, at Westminster school, by Sir Henry Vane the younger, who sent him to Oxford; where this effervescent genius was, says Wood, "kicked, and beaten, and whipped." But if these little circumstances marked the irritability and boldness of his youth, it was equally distinguished by an entire devotion to his studies. Perhaps, one of the most anomalous of human characters was that of his patron, Sir Henry Vane the younger (whom Milton has immortalised in one of the noblest of sonnets), the head of the Independents, who combined with the darkest spirit of fanaticism the clear views of the most sagacious politician. The gratitude of Stubbe lasted through all the changeful fortunes of the chief of a faction—a long date in the records of human affection! Stubbe had written against monarchy, the church, the university, &c.; for which, after the Restoration, he was accused by his antagonists. He exults in the reproach; he replies with all that frankness of simplicity, so beautiful amid our artificial manners. He denies not the charge; he never trims, nor glosses over, nor would veil, a single part of his conduct. He wrote to serve his patrons, but never himself. I preserve the whole of this noble passage in the note *. Wood bears witness to his perfect disinterestedness. He never partook of the prosperity of his patron, nor mixed with any parties, loving the retirement of his private studies: and if he scorned and hated one party, the presbyterians, it was, says Wood, because his high generous nature

* When Sprat and Glanvill, and others, had threatened to write his life, Stubbe draws this apology for it, while he shows how much, in a time of revolutions, the Royal Society might want one for themselves.

"I was so far from being daunted at those rumours and threats, that I enlarged much this book thereupon, and resolved to charge the enemy home when I saw how weak a resistance I should meet with. I knew that recriminations were no answers. I understood well that the passages of a life like mine, spent in different places with much privacy and obscurity, was unknown to them; that even those actions they would fix their greatest calumnies upon, were such as that they understood not the grounds, nor had they learning enough and skill to condemn. I was at Westminster School when the late king was beheaded. I never took covenant nor engagement. In sum, *I served my patron.* I endeavoured to express my *gratitude* to him who had relieved me, being a *child*, and in great poverty (the rebellion in Ireland having deprived my parents of all means wherewith to educate me); who made me a king's scholar; preferred me to Christchurch College, Oxon.; and who often supplied me with money when my tender years gave him little hopes of any return; and who protected me amidst the *presbyterians* and *independents*, and other *sects*. With none thereof did I contract any relation or acquaintance; my familiarity never engaged me with ten of that party; and my genius and humour inclined me to fewer. I neither enriched, nor otherwise advanced myself, during the late troubles; and shared the common *odium* and *dangers*, not *prosperity*, with my *benefactor*. I believe no generous man, who hath the least sense of bravery, will condemn me; and I profess I am ashamed rather to have done so little, than that I have done so much, for him that so frankly obliged a *stranger* and a *child*. When Gracchus was put to death for sedition, that faithful friend and accomplice of his was dismissed, and mentioned with honour by all posterity, who, when he was impeached, *justified his treason* by the avowing a *friendship* so great, that, whatever Gracchus had commanded him, he would not have declined it. And being further questioned, whether he would have burned the capitol at his bidding? he replied again, that he should have done it; but Gracchus would not bid such a thing. They that knew me heretofore, know I have a thousand times thus apologised for myself; adding, that in *vassals* and *slaves*, and persons *transcendently obliged*, their fidelity exempted them from all ignominy, though the principal *lords*, *masters*, and *patrons*, might be accounted *traitors*. My youth, and other circumstances, incapacitated me from rendering him any great services; but *all that I did*, and *all that I writ*, had no other aim than *his interest*; nor do I care how much any man can inodiate my former writings, as long as they were subservient to him.

"Having made this declaration, let them (or more able men than they) write the life of a man who hath some virtues of the most celebrated times, and hath preserved himself free from the vices of these. My reply shall be a scornful silence."

Preface to Stubbe's "Legends no Histories," 1670.

detested men "void of generous souls, sneaking, snivelling, &c." Stubbe appears to have carried this philosophical indifference towards objects of a higher interest than those of mere profit; for, at the Restoration, he found no difficulty in conforming to the church*, and to the government. The king bestowed on him the title of his physician; yet, for the sake of making philosophical experiments, Stubbe went to Jamaica; and intended to have proceeded to Mexico and Peru, pursuing his profession, but still an adventurer. At length, Stubbe returned home; established himself as a physician at Warwick, where, though he died early, he left a name celebrated. The fertility of his pen appears in a great number of philosophical, political, and medical publications. But all his great learning, the facility of his genius, his poignant wit, his high professional character, his lofty independence, his scorn of practising the little mysterious arts of life, availed nothing; for while he was making himself popular among his auditors, he was eagerly depreciated by those who would not willingly allow merit to a man who owned no master, and who feared no rival.

Literary coteries were then held at coffee-houses; and there presided the voluble Stubbe, with "a big and magisterial voice, while his mind was equal to it," says the characterising Wood; but his attenuated frame seemed too delicate to hold long so unbroken a spirit. It was an accident, however, which closed this life of toil and hurry and petulant genius. Going to a patient at night, Stubbe was drowned in a very shallow river, "his head (adds our cynic, who had generously paid the tribute of his just admiration with his strong peculiarity of style) being then intoxicated with bibbing, but more with talking and snuffing of powder."

Such was the adversary of the Royal Society! It is quite in character, that under the government of Cromwell, he himself should have spread a taste for what was then called "The New Philosophy," among our youth and gentlemen; with the view of rendering the clergy contemptible; or, as he says, "to make them appear egregious fools in matters of common discourse." He had always a motive for his actions, however opposite they were; pretending that he was never moved by caprice, but guided by principle. One of his adversaries, however, has reason to say, that judging him by his "printed papers, he was a man of excellent contradictory parts." After the Restoration, he furnished as odd, but as forcible a reason, for opposing the Royal Society. At that time the nation, recent from republican ardours, was often panic-struck by papistical conspiracies, and projects of arbitrary power; and it was on this principle that he took part against the Society. Influenced by Dr. Fell and others, he suffered them to infuse these extravagant opinions into his mind. No private ends appear to have influenced his changeable conduct; and in the present instance he was sacrificing his personal feelings to his public principles; for Stubbe was then in the most friendly correspondence with the illustrious Boyle, the father of the Royal Society, who admired the ardour of Stubbe, till he found its inconvenience.

Stubbe opened his formidable attacks, for they form a series, by replying to the "Plus Ultra" of Glanvill, with a title as quaint, "The *Plus Ultra* reduced to a *Non-plus*, in animadversions on Mr. Glanvill and the Virtuosi." For a pretence for this violent attack, he strained a passage in Glanvill; insisting that the honour of the whole faculty, of which he was a member, was deeply concerned, to refute Glanvill's assertion, that "the ancient physicians could not cure a cut finger." — This Glanvill denied he had ever affirmed or thought†; but war once resolved on,

* His reasons for conformity on these important objects are given with his usual simplicity.— "I have at length removed all the umbrages I ever lay under. I have joined myself to the Church of England, not only upon account of its being *publicly imposed* (which in *things indifferent* is no small consideration, as I learned from the Scottish transactions at Perth), but because it is *the least defining*, and consequently *the most comprehensive and fitting to be national.*"

† The aspersed passage in Glanvill is this: "The philosophers of elder times, though their wits were excellent, yet the way they took was not like to bring much advantage to knowledge, or any of the uses of human life, being, for the most part, that of *Notion* and *Dispute*, which still runs round in a labyrinth of talk, but advanceth nothing. *These methods*, in so many centuries, *never brought the world so much practical beneficial knowledge as could help towards the cure of a cut finger.*" Plus Ultra, p. 7.—Stubbe, with all the malice of a wit, drew his inference, and turned the point unfairly against his adversary!

I shall here observe how much some have to answer, in a literary court of conscience, when they unfairly depreciate the works of a contemporary; and how idly the literary historian performs his task, whenever he adopts the character of a writer, from another who is his adversary. This may be particularly shown in the present instance.

Morhoff, in his *Polyhistor Litteraria*, censures the *Plus Ultra* of Glanvill, conceiving that he had treated with contempt all ages and nations but his own. The German Bibliographer had never

a pretext as slight as the present serves the purpose; and so that an odium be raised against the enemy, the end is obtained before the injustice is acknowledged. This is indeed the history of other wars than those of words. The present was protracted with an hostility unsubduing and unsubdued. At length the malicious ingenuity, or the heated fancy, of Stubbe, hardly sketched a political conspiracy, accusing the ROYAL SOCIETY of having adopted the monstrous projects of CAMPANELLA; — an anomalous genius, who was confined by the Inquisition the greater part of his life, and who, among some political reveries, projected the establishment of a universal empire, though he was for shaking off the yoke of authority in the philosophical world. He was for one government and one religion throughout Europe, but in other respects he desired to leave the minds of men quite free. Campanella was one of the new lights of the age; and his hardy, though wild genius, much more resembled our Stubbe, who denounced his extravagancies, than any of the Royal Society, to whom he was so artfully compared.

This tremendous attack appeared in Stubbe's "Campanella revived, or an Enquiry into the History of the Royal Society; whether the Virtuosi there do not pursue the projects of Campanella, for reducing England unto Popery; relating the quarrel betwixt H. S. and the R. S. &c. 1670*."

Such was the dread which his reiterated attacks caused the Royal Society, that they employed against him all the petty persecutions of power

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seen the book, but took its character from Stubbe and Meric Casaubon. The design of the *Plus Ultra*, however, differs little from the other works of Glanville, which Morhoff had seen, and has highly commended.

* The political reverie of Campanella was even suspected to cover very opposite designs to those he seemed to be proposing to the world. He attempted to turn men's minds from all inquiries into politics and religion, to mere philosophical ones. He wished that the passions of mankind might be so directed, as to spend their force in philosophical discussions, and in improvements in science. He therefore insisted on a uniformity on those great subjects which have so long agitated modern Europe; for the ancients seem to have had no wars merely for religion, and perhaps none for modes of government. One may discover an enlightened principle in the project; but the character of Campanella was a jumble of sense, subtlety, and wildness. He probably masked his real intentions. He appears an advocate for the firm establishment of the papal despotism; yet he aims to give an enlightened principle to regulate the actions of mankind. The intentions of a visionary are difficult to define. If he were really an advocate for despotism, what occasioned an imprisonment for the greater part of his days? Did he lay his project much deeper than the surface of things? Did Campanella imagine, that, if men were allowed to philosophise with the utmost freedom, the despotism of religion and politics would dissolve away in the weakness of its quiescent state?

The project is a chimera—but, according to the projector, the political and religious freedom of *England* formed its greatest obstacle. Part of his plan, therefore, includes the means of weakening the Insular Heretics by intestine divisions—a mode not seldom practised by the continental powers of France and Spain.

The political project of this fervid genius was, that his "Prince," the Spanish king, should be the mightiest sovereign in Europe. For this, he was first to prohibit all theological controversies from the Transalpine schools, those of Germany, &c. "A controversy," he observes, "always shows a kind of victory, and may serve as an authority to a bad cause." He would therefore admit of no commentaries on the Bible, to prevent all diversity of opinion. He would have revived the ancient philosophical sects, instead of the modern religious sects.

The *Greek* and the *Hebrew* languages were not to be taught! for the republican freedom of the ancient Jews and Grecians had often proved destructive of monarchy. Hobbes, in the bold scheme of his Leviathan, seems to have been aware of this fatality. Campanella would substitute for these ancient languages, the study of the *Arabic* tongue! The troublesome Transalpine wits might then employ themselves in confuting the Turks, rather than in vexing the Catholics; so closely did sagacity and extravagance associate in the mind of this wild genius. But *Mathematical* and *Astronomical* schools, and other institutions for the encouragement of the *mechanical arts*, and particularly those to which the northern genius is most apt, as navigation, &c., were to occupy the studies of the people, divert them from exciting fresh troubles, and withdraw them from theological factions. Campanella thus would make men great in science, having first made them slaves in politics; a philosophical people were to be the subjects of despots—not an impossible event!

His plan, remarkable enough, of *weakening the English*, I give in his words:—"No better way can possibly be found than by causing divisions and dissensions among them, and by continually keeping up the same; which will furnish the

and intrigue. "Thirty legions," says Stubbe, alluding to the famous reply of the philosopher, who would not dispute with a crowned head, "were to be called to aid you against a young country physician, who had so long discontinued studies of this nature." However, he announces that he has finished three more works against the Royal Society, and has a fourth nearly ready, if it be necessary to prove that the rhetorical history of the Society by Sprat must be bad, because "no eloquence can be complete if the subject-matter be foolish!" His adversaries not only threatened to write his life *, but they represented him to the king as a libeller, who ought to be whipped at a cart's tail; a circumstance which Stubbe records with the indignation of a Roman spirit†. They

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Spaniard and the French with advantageous opportunities. As for their religion, which is a moderated Calvinism, that cannot be so easily extinguished and rooted out there, unless there were some schools set up in Flanders, where the English have great commerce, by means of which there may be scattered abroad the seeds of schism and division. These people being of a nature which is still desirous of novelties and change, they are easily wrought over to anything." These *schools* were tried at Douay in Flanders, and at Valladolid in Spain, and other places. They became nests of rebellion for the English Catholics; or for any one, who, being discontented with government, was easily converted to any religion which aimed to overturn the British Constitution. The *secret history* of the Roman Catholics in England remains yet to be told: they indeed had their martyrs and their heroes; but the *public effects* appear in the frequent executions which occurred in the reigns of Elizabeth and James.

Stubbe appears to have imagined that the ROYAL SOCIETY was really formed on the principle of Campanella; to withdraw the people from intermeddling with *politics* and *religion*, by engaging them merely in philosophical pursuits. — The reaction of the public mind is an object not always sufficiently indicated by historians. The vile hypocrisy and mutual persecutions of the numerous fanatics, occasioned very relaxed and tolerant principles of religion at the Restoration; as, the democratic fury having spent itself, too great an indulgence was now allowed to monarchy. Stubbe was alarmed, that should Popery be established, the crown of England would become feudatory to foreign power, and embroil the nation in the restitution of all the abbey lands, of which, at the Reformation, the church had so zealously been plundered. He was still further alarmed that the *Virtuosi* would influence the education of our youth to these purposes; "an evil," says he, "which has been guarded against by our ancestors in founding *free-schools*, by uniformity of instruction cementing men's minds." We now smile at these terrors; perhaps they were sometimes real. The absolute necessity of strict conformity to the prevalent religion of Europe was avowed in that unrivalled scheme of despotism, which menaced to efface every trace of popular freedom, and the independence of nations, under the dominion of Napoleon.

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* To this threat of writing his life, we have already noticed the noble apology he has drawn up for the versatility of his opinions. See p. 214.— At the moment of the Restoration, it was unwise for any of the parties to reproach another for their opinions or their actions. In a national revolution, most men are implicated in the general reproach; and Stubbe said, on this occasion, that "he had observed worse faces in the Society than his own." Waller, and Sprat, and Cowley, had equally commemorated the protectorship of Cromwell, and the restoration of Charles. Our satirist insidiously congratulates himself that "*he* had never compared Oliver the regicide to Moses, or his son to Joshua;" nor that he had ever written any Pindaric ode, "dedicated to the happy memory of the most renowned Prince Oliver, Lord Protector:" nothing to recommend "the sacred urn" of that blessed spirit to the veneration of posterity; as if

> "His *fame*, like men, the elder it doth grow,
> Will of itself turn *whiter* too,
> Without what needless art can do."

These lines were, I think, taken from Sprat himself! Stubbe adds, it would be "imprudent in them to look beyond the act of indemnity and oblivion, which was more necessary to the Royal Society than to me, who joined with no party, &c."—*Preface to "Legends no Histories."*

† He has described this intercourse of his enemies at court with the king, where, when this punishment was suggested, "a generous personage, altogether unknown to me, being present, bravely and frankly interposed, saying, that 'whatever I was, I was a Roman; that Englishmen were not so precipitously to be condemned to so exemplary a punishment; that representing that book to be a libel against the king, was too remote a consequence to be admitted of in a nation free-born, and governed by laws, and tender of ill precedents.'" It was a noble speech, in the relaxed politics of the court of Charles II. He who made it deserved to have had his name more explicitly told: he is designated as "that excellent Englishman, the great ornament of this age, nation, and House of Commons; he whose single worth balanceth much

stopped his works several times, and by some stratagem they hindered him from correcting the press; but nothing could impede the career of his fearless genius. He treated with infinite ridicule their trivial or their marvellous discoveries, in his "Legends no Histories," and his "Censure on some passages of the History of the Royal Society." But while he ridiculed, he could instruct them; often contributing new knowledge, which the Royal Society had certainly been proud to have registered in their history. In his determination of depreciating the novelties of his day, he disputes even the honour of HARVEY to the discovery of the circulation of the blood: he attributes it to ANDREAS CÆSALPINUS, who not only discovered it, but had given it the name of *Circulatio Sanguinis**.

Stubbe was not only himself a man of science, but a caustic satirist who blends much pleasantry with his bitterness. In the first ardour of philosophical discovery, the Society, delighted by the acquisition of new facts, which however rarely proved to be important, and were often ludicrous in their detail, appear to have too much neglected the arts of reasoning; they did not even practise common discernment, or what we might term philosophy in its more enlarged sense †. Stubbe,

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of the debaucheries, follies, and impertinencies of the kingdom."—*A Reply unto the Letter written to Mr. Henry Stubbe, Oxford*, 1671, p. 20.

* Stubbe gives some curious information on this subject. Harvey published his Treatise at Frankfort, 1628, but Cæsalpinus's work had appeared in 1593. Harvey adopted the notion, and more fully and perspicuously proved it. I shall give what Stubbe says. "Harvey, in his two Answers to Riolan, nowhere asserts the invention so to himself, as to deny that he had the intimation or notion from Cæsalpinus; and his silence I take for a tacit confession. His *ambition of glory* made him *willing to be thought the author of a paradox* he had so illustrated, and brought upon the stage, where *it lay unregarded*, and in all probability buried in oblivion; yet such was his modesty, as not to vindicate it to himself by telling a lie."—STUBBE'S *Censure, &c.* p. 112.

I give this literary anecdote, as it enters into the history of most discoveries, of which the *improvers*, rather than the *inventors*, are usually the most known to the world. Bayle, who wrote much later than Stubbe, asserts the same, and has preserved the entire passage, art. *Cæsalpinus*. It is said Harvey is more expressly indebted to a passage in Servetus, which Wotton has given in the preface to his "Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning," edition 1725. The notion was probably then afloat, and each alike contributed to its development. Thus it was disputed with Copernicus, whether his great discovery of a fixed sun, and the earth wheeling round that star, was his own; others had certainly observed it; yet the invention was still Copernican: for that great genius alone corrected, extended, and gave perfection to a hint, till it expanded to a system.

So gradual have often been the great inventions of genius. What others *conjectured*, and some *discovered*, Harvey *demonstrated*. The fate of

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Harvey's discovery is a curious instance of that patience and fortitude which genius must too often exert in respect to itself. Though Harvey lived to his eightieth year, he hardly witnessed his great discovery established before he died; and it has been said, that he was the only one of his contemporaries who lived to see it in some repute. No physician adopted it; and, when it got into vogue, they then disputed whether he was the inventor! Sir William Temple denied not only the discovery, but the doctrine of the Circulation of the Blood. "Sense can hardly allow it; which," says he, "in this dispute, must be satisfied, as well as reason, before mankind will concur."

† Stubbe has an eloquent passage, which describes the philosophy of science. The new Experimental School had perhaps too wholly rejected some virtues of the old one; the cultivation of the human understanding, as well as the mere observation on the facts that they collected; an error which has not been entirely removed.

"That art of reasoning by which the prudent are discriminated from fools, which methodiseth and facilitates our discourses, which informs us of the validity of consequences and the probability of arguments, and manifests the fallacies of impostors; that art which gives life to solid eloquence, and which renders Statesmen, Divines, Physicians, and Lawyers, accomplished; how is this cried down and vilified, by the ignoramuses of these days! What contempt is there raised upon the disputative Ethics of Aristotle and the Stoics; and those moral instructions, which have produced the Alexanders and the Ptolemies, the Pompeys and the Ciceros, are now slighted in comparison of *day-labouring!* Did we live at Sparta, where the daily employments were the exercises of substantial virtue and gallantry, and *men*, like *setting dogs*, were rather *bred up* unto, than *taught* reason and worth, it were a more tolerable proposal (though the different policy of these times would not admit of it); but this *working*, so recommended, is but the *feeding of carp in the air*, &c. As for the study of Politics, and all critical learning, these are either pedantical, or tedious, to those who have *a shorter way of studying men.*"—*Preface to "Legends no Histories."*

with no respect for "a Society," though dignified by the addition of "Royal," says "a cabinet of Virtuosi are but pitiful reasoners. Ignorance is infectious; and 'tis possible for men to grow fools by contact. I will speak to the Virtuosi in the language of the Romish Saint Francis (who, in the wilderness, so humbly addressed his only friends,) *Salvete, fratres asini! Salvete, fratres lupi!*" As for their Transactions and their History, he thinks "they purpose to grow famous, as the Turks do to gain Paradise, by *treasuring up all the waste paper they meet with.*" He rallies them on some ridiculous attempts, such as "An Art of Flying;" an art, says Stubbe, in which they have not so much as effected the most facile part of the attempt, which is to break their necks!

Sprat, in his dedication to the king, had said that "the establishment of the Royal Society was an enterprise equal to the most renowned actions of the best princes." One would imagine that the notion of a monarch founding a society for the cultivation of the sciences, could hardly be made objectionable; but, in literary controversy, genius has the power of wresting all things to its purpose by its own peculiar force, and the art of placing every object in the light it chooses, and can thus obtain our attention, in spite of our conviction. I will add the curious animadversion of Stubbe, on Sprat's compliment to the king:—

"Never Prince acquired the fame of great and good by any knick-knacks—but by actions of political wisdom, courage, justice," &c.

Stubbe shows how Dionysius and Nero had been depraved by these *mechanic philosophers*—that

"An Aristotelian would never pardon himself if he compared *this* heroical enterprise with the actions of our Black Prince or Henry V.; or with Henry VIII. in demolishing abbeys, and rejecting the papal authority; or Queen Elizabeth's exploits against Spain; or her restoring the Protestant Religion, putting the Bible into English, and supporting the Protestants beyond sea. But the reasons he (Sprat) gives why the establishment of the Royal Society of Experimentators equals the most renowned actions of the best princes, is such a pitiful one as Guzman de Alfarache never met with in the whole extent of the *Hospital of Fools*—'To increase the power, by new arts, of conquered nations!' These consequences are twisted like the *cordage of Ocnus*, the God of Sloth, in hell, which are fit for nothing but *to fodder asses with.* If our historian means by *every little invention to increase the powers of mankind*, as an enterprise of such renown, he is deceived; this glory is not due to such as go about with a dog and a hoop, nor to the practisers of legerdemain, or upon the high or low rope; not to every mountebank and his man Andrew; all which, with many other mechanical and experimental philosophers, do in some sort increase the powers of mankind, and differ no more from some of the Virtuosi, than *a cat in a hole* doth from *a cat out of a hole;* betwixt which that inquisitive person ASDRYASDUST TOSSOFFACAN found a very great resemblance. 'Tis not the increasing of the *powers of mankind* by a pendulum watch, nor spectacles whereby divers may see under water, nor the new ingenuity of apple-roasters, nor every petty discovery or instrument, must be put in comparison, much less preferred before the *protection and enlargement of empires**."

Had Stubbe's death not occurred, this warfare had probably continued. He insisted on a complete victory. He had forced the Royal Society to disclaim their own works, by an announcement that they were not answerable, as a body, for the various contributions which they gave the world: an advertisement which has been more than once found necessary to be renewed. As for their historian Sprat, our intrepid Stubbe very unexpectedly offered to manifest to the Parliament that this courtly adulator, by his book, was chargeable with high treason; if they believed that the Royal Society were really engaged so deeply as he averred in the portentous Cæsarean Popery of Campanella. Glanvill, who had "insulted all university learning," had been immolated at the pedestal of Aristotle. "I have done enough," he adds, "since my animadversions contain more than they all knew; and that these have shown that the *Virtuosi* are very great impostors, or men of little reading;" alluding to the various discoveries which they promulgated as novelties, but which Stubbe had asserted were known to the ancients and others of a later period. This forms a perpetual accusation against the inventors and discoverers, who may often exclaim, "Perish those who have done our good works before us!" "The discoveries of the Ancients and Moderns" by Dutens, had this book been then published, might have assisted our keen investigator; but our combatant ever proudly met his adversaries single-handed.

The "Philosophical Transactions" were afterwards accused of another kind of high treason, against grammar and common sense. It was long before the collectors of facts practised the art of writing on them; still later before they could philosophise, as well as observe: Bacon and Boyle were at first only imitated in their patient industry. When Sir HANS SLOANE was the secretary of the Royal Society, he, and most of his correspondents, wrote in the most confused manner imaginable. A wit of a very original cast, the

* Legends no Histories, p. 5.

facetious Dr. KING, took advantage of their perplexed and often unintelligible descriptions; of the meanness of their style, which humbled even the great objects of nature; of their credulity that heaped up marvels, and their vanity that prided itself on petty discoveries, and invented a new species of satire. SLOANE, a name endeared to posterity, whose life was that of an enthusiast of science, and who was the founder of a national collection; and his numerous friends, many of whose names have descended with the regard due to the votaries of knowledge, fell the victims. Wit is an unsparing leveller.

The new species of literary burlesque which King seems to have invented, consists in selecting the very expressions and absurd passages from the original he ridiculed, and framing out of them a droll dialogue or a grotesque narrative, he adroitly inserted his own remarks, replete with the keenest irony, or the driest sarcasm*. Our arch wag says, "The bulls and blunders which Sloane and his friends so naturally pour forth cannot be misrepresented, so careful I am in producing them."

King still moves the risible muscles of his readers. "The voyage to Cajamai," a travestie of Sloane's valuable History of Jamaica, is still a peculiar piece of humour; and it has been rightly distinguished as "one of the severest and merriest satires that ever was written in prose†." The author might indeed have blushed at the labour bestowed on these drolleries; he might have dreaded that humour, so voluminous, might grow tedious; but King, often with a LUCIANIC spirit, with flashes of RABELAIS, and not seldom with the causticity of his friend Swift, dissipated life in literary idleness, with parodies and travesties on most of his contemporaries; and he made these little things often more exquisite, at the cost of consuming on them a genius capable of better. A parodist, or a burlesquer, is a wit who is perpetually on the watch to catch up or to disguise an author's words; to swell out his defects, and pick up his blunders—to amuse the public! King was a wit, who lived on the highway of literature, appropriating, for his own purpose, the property of the most eminent passengers, by a dextrous mode no other had hit on. What an important lesson the labours of King offer to real genius! Their temporary humour lost with their prototypes becomes like a paralytic limb, which refusing to do its office, impedes the action of the vital members.

WOTTON, in summing up his "Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning," was doubtful whether knowledge would improve in the next age, proportionably as it had done in his own. "The humour of the age is visibly altered," he says,

* Sloane describes Clark, the famous posture-master, Phil. Trans. No. 242, certainly with the wildest grammar, but with many curious particulars; the gentleman in one of Dr. King's Dialogues inquires the secretary's opinion of the causes of this man's wonderful pliability of limbs; a question which Sloane had thus solved, with colloquial ease, it depended upon "bringing his body to it, by using himself to it."

In giving an account of "a child born without a brain"—Had it lived long enough, says King, it would have made an excellent publisher of Philosophical Transactions!

Sloane presented the Royal Society with "a figure of a Chinese, representing one of that nation using an ear-picker, and expressing great satisfaction therein." — "Whatever pleasure," said that learned physician, "the Chinese may take in thus picking their ears, I am certain, most people in these parts, who have had their hearing impaired, have had such misfortunes first come to them by picking their ears too much."—He is so *curious*, says King, that the secretary took as much satisfaction in looking upon the ear-picker, as the Chinese could do in picking their ears!

But "What drowning is"—that "Hanging is only apoplexy!" that "Men cannot swallow when they are dead!" that "No fish die of fevers!" that "Hogs s—t soap, and cows s—t fire!" that the secretary had "Shells, called *Blackmoor's-teeth*, I suppose, from their *whiteness!*" and the learned RAY's, that grave naturalist, incredible description of "a very curious little instrument!" I leave to the reader and Dr. King.

† Sir Hans Sloane was unhappily not insensible to these ludicrous assaults, and in the preface to his "History of Jamaica, 1707," a work so highly prized for its botanical researches, absolutely anticipated this fatal facetiousness, for thus he delivers himself:—"Those who strive to make ridiculous anything of this kind, and think themselves great wits, but are very ignorant, and understand nothing of the argument; these, if one were afraid of them, and consulted his own ease, might possibly hinder the publication of any such work, the efforts to be expected from them, making possibly some impression upon persons of equal dispositions; but considering that I have the approbation of others, whose judgment, knowledge, &c. I have great reason to value; and considering that these sorts of men have been in all ages ready to do the like, not only to ordinary persons and their equals, but even to abuse their prince and blaspheme their Maker, I shall, as I have ever since I seriously considered this matter, think of and treat them with the greatest contempt."

"from what it had been thirty years ago. Though the Royal Society has weathered the rude attacks of Stubbe," yet "the sly insinuations of the *Men of Wit*," with "the *public ridiculing* of all who spend their time and fortunes in scientific or curious researches, have so taken off the edge of those who have opulent fortunes and a love to learning, that these studies begin to be contracted amongst physicians and mechanics."—He treats King with good-humour. "A man is got but a very little way (in philosophy) that is concerned as often as such a merry gentleman as Dr. King shall think fit to make himself sport*.

* Dr. King's dispersed works have fortunately been collected by Mr. Nichols, with ample illustrations, in three vols. 8vo, 1776. The "Useful Transactions in Philosophy and other sorts of Learning," form a collection of ludicrous dissertations of Antiquarianism, Natural Philosophy, Criticism, &c., where his own peculiar humour combines with his curious reading. He also invented *satirical and humorous indexes*, not the least facetious parts of his volumes. King had made notes on more than 20,000 books and MSS., and his *Adversaria*, of which a portion has been preserved, is not inferior in curiosity to the literary journals of Gibbon, though it wants the investigating spirit of the modern philosopher.

SIR JOHN HILL

WITH

THE ROYAL SOCIETY, FIELDING, SMART, &c.

A Parallel between Orator HENLEY and Sir JOHN HILL—his love of the Science of Botany, with the fate of his "Vegetable System"—ridicules scientific Collectors; his "Dissertation on Royal Societies," and his "Review of the Works of the Royal Society"—compliments himself that he is NOT a Member—successful in his attacks on the Experimentalists, but loses his spirit in encountering the Wits—"The Inspector"—a paper-war with FIELDING—a literary stratagem—battles with SMART and WOODWARD—HILL appeals to the Nation for the Office of Keeper of the Sloane Collection—closes his life by turning Empiric.—Some Epigrams on HILL—his Miscellaneous Writings.

IN the history of literature, we discover some who have opened their career with noble designs, and with no deficient powers, yet unblest with stoic virtues, having missed, in their honourable labours, those rewards they had anticipated, they have exhibited a sudden transition of character, and have left only a name proverbial for its disgrace.

Our own literature exhibits two extraordinary characters, indelibly marked by the same traditional odium. The wit and acuteness of Orator HENLEY, and the science and vivacity of the versatile Sir JOHN HILL, must separate them from those who plead the same motives for abjuring all moral restraint, without having ever furnished the world with a single instance that they were capable of forming nobler views.

This *orator* and this *knight* would admit of a close parallel *; both as modest in their youth as afterwards remarkable for their effrontery. Their youth witnessed the same devotedness to study, with the same inventive and enterprising genius. Hill projected and pursued a plan of botanical travels, to form a collection of rare plants: the patronage he received was too limited, and he suffered the misfortune of having anticipated the national taste for the science of botany by half a century. Our young philosopher's valuable "Treatise on Gems," from Theophrastus, procured for him the warm friendship of the eminent members of the Royal Society. To this critical period of the lives of Henley and of Hill, their resemblance is striking; nor is it less from the moment the surprising revolution in their characters occurred.

Pressed by the wants of life, they lost its decencies. Henley attempted to poise himself against the University; Hill, against the Royal Society. Rejected by these learned bodies, both these Cains of literature, amid their luxuriant ridicule of eminent men, still evince some claims to rank among them. The one prostituted his genius in his "Lectures;" the other, in his "Inspectors." Never two authors were more constantly pelted with epigrams, or buffeted in literary quarrels. They have met with the same fate; covered with the same odium. Yet Sir John Hill, this despised man, after all the fertile absurdities of his literary life, performed more for the improvement of the "Philosophical Transactions," and was the cause of diffusing a more general taste for the science of botany, than any other contemporary. His real ability extorts that regard which his misdirected ingenuity, instigated by vanity, and often by more worthless motives, had lost for him in the world†.

* The moral and literary character of Henley has been developed in "Calamities of Authors."

† The twenty-six folios of his "Vegetable System," with many others, testify his love and his labour. It contains 1600 plates, representing 26,000 different figures of plants *from nature*

At the time that Hill was engaged in several large compilations for the booksellers, his employers were desirous that the honours of an F. R. S. should ornament his title-page. This versatile genius, however, during these graver works, had suddenly emerged from his learned garret, and, in the shape of a fashionable lounger, rolled in his chariot from the Bedford to Ranelagh; was visible at routs; and sate at the theatre a tremendous arbiter of taste, raising about him tumults and divisions *; and in his "Inspectors," a periodical paper which he published in the London Daily Advertiser, he retailed all the great matters relating to himself, and all the little matters he collected in his rounds relating to others. Among other personalities, he indulged his satirical fluency on the scientific collectors. The Antiquarian Society were twitted as medal-scrapers and antediluvian knife-grinders; conchologists were turned into cockleshell merchants; and the naturalists were made to record pompous histories of stittle-backs and cockchafers. Cautioned by Martin Folkes, president of the Royal Society, not to attempt his election, our enraged comic philosopher, who had preferred his jests to his friends, now discovered that he had lost three hundred at once. Hill could not obtain three signatures to his recommendation. Such was the real, but, as usual, not the ostensible, motive of his formidable attack on the Royal Society. He produced his "Dissertation on Royal Societies, in a letter from a Sclavonian nobleman to his friend, 1751;" a humorous prose satire, exhibiting a ludicrous description of a tumultuous meeting at the Royal Society, contrasted with the decorum observed in the French Academy; and, moreover, he added a *conversazione* in a coffee-house between some of the members.

Such was the declaration of war, in a first act of hostility; but the pitched-battle was fought in "A Review of the Works of the Royal Society, in eight parts, 1751." This literary satire is nothing less than a quarto volume, resembling, in its form and manner, the Philosophical Transactions themselves; printed as if for the convenience of members to enable them to bind the Review with the work reviewed. Voluminous pleasantry incurs the censure of that tedious trifling, which it designs to expose. In this literary facetia, however, no inconsiderable knowledge is interspersed with the ridicule. Perhaps Hill might have recollected the successful attempts of Stubbe on the Royal Society, who contributed that curious knowledge which he

only. This publication ruined the author, whose widow (the sister of Lord Ranelagh) published "An Address to the Public, by the Hon. Lady Hill, setting forth the consequences of the late Sir John Hill's acquaintance with the Earl of Bute, 1787."—I should have noticed it in the "Calamities of Authors." It offers a sad and mortifying lesson to the votary of science who aspires to a noble enterprise. Lady Hill complains of the *patron*; but a patron, however great, cannot always raise the public taste to the degree required to afford the only true patronage which can animate and reward an author. Her detail is impressive:—

"Sir John Hill had just wrote a book of great elegance—I think it was called *Exotic Botany*—which he wished to have presented to the king, and therefore named it to Lord Bute. His lordship waived that, saying, that 'he had a greater object to propose;' and shortly after laid before him a plan of the most voluminous, magnificent, and costly work that ever man attempted. I tremble when I name its title—because I think the severe application which it required killed him; and I am sure the expense ruined his fortune—'*The Vegetable System.*' This work was to consist of 26 volumes folio, containing 1600 copper-plates, the engraving of each cost four guineas; the paper was of the most expensive kind; the drawings by the first hands. The printing was also a very weighty concern; and many other articles, with which I am unacquainted. Lord Bute said, that 'the expense had been considered, and that Sir John Hill might rest assured his circumstances should not be injured.' Thus he entered upon and finished his destruction. The sale bore no proportion to the expense. After 'The Vegetable System' was completed, Lord Bute proposed another volume to be added, which Sir John strenuously opposed; but his lordship repeating his desire, Sir John complied, lest his lordship should find a pretext to cast aside repeated promises of ample provision for himself and family. But this was the crisis of his fate—he died." Lady Hill adds:—"He was a character on which every virtue was impressed." The domestic partiality of the widow cannot alter the truth of the narrative of "The Vegetable System," and its twenty-six tomes.

* His apologist forms this excuse for one then affecting to be a student and a rake:—"Though engaged in works which required the attention of a whole life, he was so exact an economist of his time, that he scarcely ever missed a public amusement for many years; and this, as he somewhere observes, was of no small service to him; as, without indulging in these respects, he could not have undergone the fatigue and study inseparable from the execution of his vast designs."—Short Account of the Life, Writings, and Character, of the late Sir John Hill, M.D. Edinburgh, 1779.

pretended the Royal Society wanted; and with this knowledge he attempted to combine the humour of Dr. King*.

Hill's rejection from the Royal Society, to another man would have been a puddle to step over; but he tells a story, and cleanly passes on, with impudent adroitness†.

Hill, however, though he used all the freedom of a satirist, by exposing many ridiculous papers, taught the Royal Society a more cautious selection.

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* Hill planned his Review with good sense. He says:—"If I am merry in some places, it ought to be considered that the subjects are too ridiculous for serious criticism. That the work, however, might not be without its *real use*, an *Error* is nowhere exposed without establishing a *Truth* in its place." He has incidentally thrown out much curious knowledge; such as his plan for forming a *Hortus Siccus*, &c. The Review itself may still be considered both as curious and entertaining.

† In exposing their deficiencies, as well as their redundancies, Hill only wishes, as he tells us, that the Society may by this means become ashamed of what it has been, and that the world may know that *he is* NOT *a member of it till it is an honour to a man to be so!*—This was telling the world, with some ingenuity, and with no little impudence, that the Royal Society would not admit him as a member. He pretends to give a secret anecdote, to explain the cause of this rejection. Hill, in every critical conjuncture of his affairs, and they were frequent ones, had always a story to tell, or an evasion, which served its momentary purpose. When caned by an Irish gentleman at Ranelagh, and his personal courage, rather than his stoicism, was suspected, he published a story of *his* having once caned a person whom he called Mario; on which a wag, considering Hill as a Prometheus, wrote,

"To beat one man great Hill was fated.
What man?—a man whom he created!"

We shall see the story he turned to his purpose, when pressed hard by Fielding. In the present instance, in a letter to a foreign correspondent, who had observed his name on the list of the *Correspondents* of the Royal Society, Hill said: "You are to know, that *I have the honour* NOT *to be a Member of the Royal Society of London.*"—This letter lay open on his table when a member, upon his accustomed visit, came in, and in his absence read it. "And we are not to wonder (says Hill), that he who could obtain intelligence in this manner could also divulge it. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* Hence all the animosities that have since disturbed this Philosophic world." While Hill insolently congratulates himself that he is *not* a Member of the Royal Society, he has most evidently shown that he had no objection to be the member of any society, which would enrol his name among them. He obtained his Medical Degree from no honourable source; and another title, which he affected, he mysteriously contracted into barbaric dissonance. Hill entitled himself

Acad. Reg. Scient. Burd. &c. Soc.

To which Smart, in the Hilliad, alludes—

"While *Jargon* gave his titles on a *block*,
And styled him M.D. Acad. Budig. Soc."

His personal attacks on Martin Folkes, the President, are caustic, but they may not be true; and on Baker, celebrated for his microscopical discoveries, are keen. He reproaches Folkes, in his severe Dedication of the Work, in all the dignity of solemn invective.—"The manner in which you represented me to a Noble Friend, while to myself you made me much more than I deserved; the ease with which you had excused yourself, and the solemnity with which, in the face of Almighty God, you excused yourself again; when we remember that the whole was done within the compass of a day; these are surely virtues in a patron that I, of all men, ought not to pass over in silence."—Baker, in his early days, had unluckily published a volume of lusory poems. Some imitations of Prior's loose tales Hill makes use of to illustrate *his* "Philosophical Transactions." All is food for the malicious digestion of Wit!

His Anecdote of Mr. Baker's *Louse*, is a piece of secret scientific history sufficiently ludicrous.

"The Duke of Montague was famous for his love to the whole animal creation, and for his being able to keep a very grave face when not in the most serious earnest. Mr. Baker, a distinguished Member of the Royal Society, had one day entertained this Nobleman, and several other persons, with the sight of the peristaltic motion of the bowels in a louse, by the microscope. When the observation was over, he was going to throw the creature away; but the Duke, with a face that made him believe he was perfectly in earnest, told him it would be not only cruel, but ungrateful, in return for the entertainment that creature had given them, to destroy it. He ordered the boy to be brought in from whom it was procured, and after praising the smallness and delicacy of Mr. Baker's fingers, persuaded him carefully to replace the animal in its former territories, and to give the boy a shilling not to disturb it for a fortnight."—*A Review of the Works of the Royal Society, by John Hill, M.D.*, p. 5.

It could, however, obtain no forgiveness from the parties it offended; and while the respectable men whom Hill had the audacity to attack, Martin Folkes, the friend and successor of Newton, and Henry Baker, the Naturalist, were above his censure,—his own reputation remained in the hands of his enemies. While Hill was gaining over the laughers on his side, that volatile populace soon discovered that the fittest object to be laughed at was our literary Proteus himself.

The most egregious egotism alone could have induced this versatile being, engaged in laborious works, to venture to give the town the daily paper of "The Inspector," which he supported for about two years. It was a light scandalous chronicle all the week, with a seventh-day sermon. His utter contempt for the genius of his contemporaries, and the bold conceit of his own, often rendered the motley pages amusing. "The Inspector" became, indeed, the instrument of his own martyrdom; but his impudence looked like magnanimity; for he endured, with undiminished spirit, the most biting satires, the most wounding epigrams, and more palpable castigations*. His vein of pleasantry ran more freely in his attacks on the Royal Society than in his other literary quarrels. When Hill had not to banter ridiculous experimentalists, but to encounter wits, his reluctant spirit soon bowed its head. Suddenly even his pertness loses its vivacity; he becomes drowsy with dulness, and, conscious of the dubiousness of his own cause, he sculks away terrified: he felt that the mask of quackery and impudence which he usually wore was to be pulled off by the hands now extended against him.

A humorous warfare of wit opened between Fielding, in his "Covent Garden Journal," and Hill, in his "Inspector." The Inspector had made the famous lion's head, at the Bedford, which the genius of Addison and Steele had once animated, the receptacle of his wit; and the wits asserted, of this now *inutile lignum*, that it was reduced to a mere state of *blockheadism*. Fielding occasionally gave a facetious narrative of a paper war between the forces of Sir Alexander Drawcansir, the literary hero of the Covent Garden Journal, and the army of Grub Street: it formed an occasional literary satire. Hill's lion, no longer Addison's or Steele's, is not described without humour. Drawcansir's "troops are kept in awe by a strange mixed monster, not much unlike the famous chimera of old. For while some of our Reconnoiterers tell us that this monster has the appearance of a lion, others assure us that his ears are much longer than those of that generous beast."

Hill ventured to notice this attack on his "blockhead;" and, as was usual with him, had some secret history to season his defence with.

"The author of Amelia, whom I have only once seen, told me, at that accidental meeting, he held the present set of writers in the utmost contempt; and that, in his character of Sir Alexander Drawcansir, he should treat them in the most unmerciful manner. He assured me he had always excepted me; and after honouring me with some encomiums, he proceeded to mention a conduct which would be, he said, useful to both; this was, the amusing our readers with a mock fight; giving blows that would not hurt, and sharing the advantage in silence†."

Thus, by reversing the fact, Hill contrived to turn aside the frequent stories against him by a momentary artifice, arresting or dividing public opinion. The truth was, more probably, as Fielding relates it, and the story, as we shall see, then becomes quite a different affair. At all events, Hill incurred the censure of the traitor who violates a confidential intercourse.

"And if he lies not, must at least betray."

POPE.

* These Papers had appeared in the London Daily Advertiser, 1754. At their close he gleaned the best, and has preserved them in two volumes. But as Hill will never rank as a classic, the original nonsense will be considered as most proper for the purposes of a true Collector. Woodward, the comedian, in his lively attack on Hill, has given "a mock Inspector," an exquisite piece of literary ridicule, in which he has hit off the egotisms and slovenly ease of the real ones.—Never, like "The Inspector," flamed such a provoking prodigy, in the cloudy skies of Grub-street; and Hill seems studiously to have mortified his luckless rivals, by a perpetual embroidery of his adventures in "the Walks at Marybone," the "Rotunda at Ranelagh," spangled over with "my domestics," and "my equipage."

† It is useful to remind the public, that they are often played upon in this manner by the artifices of *political writers*. We have observed symptoms of this deception practised at present. It is an old trick of the craft, and was greatly used at a time when the nation seemed maddened with political factions. In a pamphlet of "A View of London and Westminster, or the Town-spy, 1725," I find this account:—"The *seeming quarrel*, formerly, between *Mist's Journal* and the *Flying Post*, was *secretly concerted* between themselves, in order to decoy the eyes of all the parties on both their papers; and the project succeeded beyond all expectation; for, I have been told, that the former narrowly missed getting an estate by it."—P. 32.

Fielding lost no time in reply. To have brought down the Inspector from his fastnesses into the open field, was what our new General only wanted: a battle was sure to be a victory. Our critical Drawcansir has performed his part, with his indifferent puns, but his natural facetiousness.

"It being reported to the General that a *hill* must be levelled, before the Bedford coffee-house could be taken, orders were given; but this was afterwards found to be a mistake; for this *hill* was only a little paltry *dunghill*, and had long before been levelled with the dirt.—The General was then informed of a report which had been spread by his *lowness*, the Prince of Billingsgate, in the Grub-street army, that his Excellency had proposed, by a *secret treaty* with that Prince, to carry on the war only in appearance, and so to betray the common cause; upon which his Excellency said with a smile:—'If the betrayer of a private treaty could ever deserve the least credit, yet his Lowness here must proclaim himself either a liar or a fool. None can doubt but that he is the former, if he hath feigned this treaty; and I think few would scruple to call him the latter, if he had rejected it.' The General then declared the fact stood thus:—'His Lowness came to my tent on an affair of his own. I treated him, though a commander in the enemy's camp, with civility, and even kindness. I told him, with the utmost good-humour, I should attack his Lion; and that he might, if he pleased, in the same manner defend him; from which, said I, no great loss can happen on either side—'"

"The Inspector" slunk away, and never returned to the challenge.

During his inspectorship, he invented a whimsical literary stratagem, which ended in his receiving a castigation more lasting than the honours performed on him at Ranelagh, by the cane of a warm Hibernian. Hill seems to have been desirous of abusing certain friends whom he had praised in the "Inspectors;" so volatile, like the loves of coquettes, are the literary friendships of the "Scribleri." As this could not be done with any propriety there, he published the first number of a new paper, entitled "The Impertinent." Having thus relieved his private feelings, he announced the cessation of this new enterprise in his "Inspectors," and congratulated the public on the ill reception it had given to the "Impertinent," applauding them for their having shown by this, that "their indignation was superior to their curiosity." With impudence all his own, he adds, "It will not be easy to say too much in favour of the candour of the town, which has despised a piece that cruelly and unjustly attacked Mr. Smart the poet." What innocent soul could have imagined that "The Impertinent" and "The Inspector" were the same individual? The style is a specimen of *persiflage*; the thin sparkling thought; the pert vivacity, that looks like wit without wit; the glittering bubble, that rises in emptiness;—even its author tells us, in "The Inspector," it is "the most pert, the most pretending," &c.*

Smart, in return for our Janus-faced critic's treatment, balanced the amount of debtor and creditor with a pungent Dunciad "The Hilliad." Hill, who had heard of the rod in pickle, anticipated the blow, to break its strength; and, according to his adopted system, introduced himself and Smart, with a story of his having recommended the bard to his bookseller, "who took him into salary on my approbation. I betrayed him into the profession, and having starved upon it, he has a right to abuse me." This story was formally denied by an advertisement from Newbery, the bookseller.

"The Hilliad" is a polished and pointed satire.

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* Isaac Reed, in his "Repository of Fugitive Pieces of Wit and Humour," vol. iv. in republishing "The Hilliad," has judiciously preserved the offending "Impertinent" and the abjuring "Inspector." The style of "The Impertinent" is volatile and poignant. His four classes of authors are not without humour.—"There are men who write because they have wit; there are those who write because they are hungry; there are some of the modern authors who have a constant fund of both these causes; and there are, who will write, although they are not instigated either by the one or by the other. The first are all spirit; the second are all earth; the third disclose more life, or more vapidity, as the one or the other cause prevails; and for the last, having neither the one nor the other principle for the cause, they show neither the one nor the other character in the effect; but begin, continue, and end, as if they had neither begun, continued, nor ended at all." The first class he instances by Fielding; the second, by Smart. Of the third, he says:—"The mingled wreath belongs to Hill," that is himself; and the fourth he illustrates by the absurd Sir William Browne.

"Those of the first rank are the most capricious and lazy of all animals. The monkey genius would rarely exert itself, if even idleness innate did not give way to the superior love of mischie The ass (that is, Smart), which characters t second, is as laborious as he is empty; he wear ridiculous comicalness of aspect (which was, indee the physiognomy of the poor poet), that mak people smile when they see him at a distanc His mouth opens, because he must be fed, whi we laugh at the insensibility and obstinacy th make him prick his lips with thistles."

The hero is thus exhibited on earth, and in heaven.

On earth, "a tawny Sibyl," with "an old striped curtain—"

"And tatter'd tapestry o'er her shoulders hung—
Her loins with patch-work cincture were begirt,
That more than spoke diversity of dirt.
Twain were her teeth, and single was her eye—
Cold palsy shook her head——"

with "moon-struck madness," awards him all the wealth and fame she could afford him for sixpence; and closes her orgasm with the sage admonition—

"The chequer'd world's before thee; go, farewell!
Beware of Irishmen; and learn to spell!"

But in heaven, among the immortals, never was an unfortunate hero of the vindictive Muses so reduced into nothingness! Jove, disturbed at the noise of this thing of wit, exclaims, that nature had never proved productive in vain before, but now,

"On mere privation she bestow'd a frame,
And dignified a nothing with a name;
A wretch devoid of use, of sense, and grace,
The insolvent tenant of incumber'd space!"

Pallas hits off the style of Hill, as

"The neutral nonsense, neither false nor true—
Should Jove himself, in calculation mad,
Still negatives to blank negations add;
How could the barren ciphers ever breed;
But nothing still from nothing would proceed.
Raise, or depress, or magnify, or blame,
Inanity will ever be the same."

But Phœbus shows there may still be something produced from inanity.

"E'en blank privation has its use and end—
From emptiness, how sweetest music flows!
How absence, to possession adds a grace,
And modest vacancy, to all gives place.
So from Hillario, some effect may spring;
E'en him—that slight penumbra of a thing!"

The careless style of the fluent "Inspectors," beside their audacity, brought Hill into many scrapes. He called Woodward, the celebrated harlequin, "the meanest of all characters." This Woodward resented in a pamphlet-battle, in which Hill was beaten at all points *. But Hill, or the monthly reviewer, who might be the same person, for that journal writes with the tenderness of a brother of whatever relates to our hero, pretends that the Inspector only meant, that "the character of Harlequin (if a thing so unnatural and ridiculous ought to be called a character) was the *meanest* on the stage!"

I will here notice a characteristic incident in Hill's literary life, of which the boldness and the egotism is scarcely paralleled, even by Orator Henley. At the time the Sloane Collection of Natural History was purchased, to form a part of our grand national establishment the British Museum, Hill offered himself, by public advertisement, in one of his Inspectors, as the properest person to be placed at its head. The world will condemn him for his impudence. The most reasonable objection against his mode of proceeding would be, that the thing undid itself; and that the very appearance, by public advertisement, was one motive why so confident an offer should be rejected. Perhaps, after all, Hill only wanted to *advertise himself*.

But suppose that Hill was the man he represents himself to be, and he fairly challenges the test, his conduct only appears eccentric, according to routine.—Unpatronised and unfriended men are depressed, among other calamities, with their quiescent modesty; but there is a rare spirit in him who dares to claim favours, which he thinks his right, in the most public manner. I preserve, in the note, the most striking passages of this extraordinary appeal †.

* Woodward humorously attributes Hill's attack on him to his *jealousy* of his successful performance of *Harlequin*, and opens some of the secret history of Hill, by which it appears, that early in life he trod the theatrical boards. He tells us of the extraordinary pains the prompter had taken with Hill, in the part of Oroonoko; though, "if he had not quite forgotten it, to very little purpose." He reminds Hill of a dramatic anecdote, which he no doubt had forgotten. It seems he once belonged to a strolling company at May-fair, where, in the scene between Altamont and Lothario, the polite audience of that place all chorused, and agreed with him, when dying he exclaimed, "Oh Altamont, thy genius is the stronger." He then shows him off as the starved apothecary in Romeo and Juliet, in one of his botanic peregrinations to Chelsea Garden; from whence, it is said, he was expelled for "culling too many rare plants"—

"I do remember an apothecary,
Culling of simples —."

Hill, who was often so brisk in his attack on the wits, had no power of retort; so that he was always buffeting and always buffeted.

† Hill addresses the Lord Chancellor, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Speaker, on Sir Hans Sloane's Collection of Natural History, proposing himself as a candidate for nomination

At length, after all these literary quarrels, Hill survived his literary character. He had written himself down to so low a degree, that whenever he had a work for publication, his employers stipulated, in their contracts, that the author should conceal his name; a circumstance not new among a certain race of writers*. But the genius of

in the principal office, by whatever name that shall be called:—"I deliver myself with humility; but conscious also that I possess the liberties of a British subject, I shall speak with freedom."—He says, that the only means left for a Briton, is to address his sovereign and the public.—"That foreigners will resort to this Collection is certain, for it is the most considerable in the world; and that our own people will often visit it is as sure, because it may be made the means of much useful as well as curious knowledge. One and the other will expect a person in that office who has sufficient knowledge: he must be able to give account of every article, freely and fluently, not only in his own, but in the Latin and French languages.

"This, the world, and none in it better than your Lordship, sees, is not a place that any one can execute: it requires knowledge in a peculiar and uncommon kind of study—knowledge which very few possess; and in which, my Lord, the bitterest of my enemies (and I have thousands, although neither myself nor they know why) will not say I am deficient——.

"My Lord, the eyes of all Europe are upon this transaction. What title I have to your Lordship's favour, those books which I have published, and with which (pardon the necessary boast) all Europe is acquainted, declare. Many may dispute by interest with me; but if there be one who would prefer himself, by his abilities, I beg the matter may be brought to trial. The Collection is at hand; and I request, my Lord, such person and myself may be examined, by that test, together. It is an amazing store of knowledge; and he has most, in this way, who shall show himself most acquainted with it.

"What are my own abilities, it very ill becomes me thus to boast; but did they not qualify me for the trust, my Lord, I would not ask it. As to those of any other, unless a man be conjured from the dead, I shall not fear to say, there is not any one whoever that is able so much as to call the parts of the Collection by their names.

"I know I shall be accused of ostentation, in giving to myself this preference; and I am sorry for it: but those who have candour, will know it could not be avoided.

"Many excel, my Lord, in other studies: it is my chance to have bestowed the labour of my life on this: those labours may be of some use to others. This appears the only instance in which it is possible that they should be rewarded ——."

In a subsequent Inspector, he treated on the improvement of Botany by raising plants, and reading lectures on them at the British Museum, with the living plants before the lecturer and his auditors.—Poor Sir John! he was born half a century too early!—He would, in this day, have made his lectures fashionable; and might have secured at the Opera, every night, an elegant audience for the next morning, in the gardens of the Museum.

* It would be difficult to form a list of his anonymous works or compilations, among which many are curious. Tradition has preserved his name as the writer of Mrs. Glasse's Cookery, and of several novels. There is a very curious work, entitled "Travels in the East," 2 vols. 8vo, of which the author has been frequently and in vain inquired after. These travels are attributed to a noble lord; but it now appears that they are a very entertaining narrative, manufactured by Hill. Whiston, the bookseller, had placed this work in his MS. catalogue of Hill's books.

There is still another production of considerable merit, entitled "Observations on the Greek and Roman Classics, 1753." A learned friend recollects, when young, that this critical work was said to be written by Hill. It excels Blackwell and Fenton; and aspires to the numerous composition of prose. The sentimental critic enters into the feelings of the great authors whom he describes, with spirit, delicacy of taste, and sometimes with beautiful illustration. It only wants a chastening hand to become a manual for the young classical student, by which he might acquire those vivid emotions, which many college tutors may not be capable of communicating.

I suspect, too, he is the author of this work, from a passage which Smart quotes, as a specimen of Hill's puffing himself, and of those smart short periods which look like wit, without being witty. In a letter to himself, as we are told, Hill writes:—"You have discovered many of the beauties of the ancients—they are obliged to you; we are obliged to you: were they alive, they would thank you; we, who are alive, do thank you."—If Hill could discriminate the most hidden beauties of the ancients, the *tact* must have been formed at his leisure—in his busy hours he never copied them; but when had he leisure?

Two other works, of the most contrasted character, display the versatility and dispositions of this singular genius, at different eras. When "The Inspector" was rolling in his chariot about the town, appeared "Letters from the Inspector to a Lady, 1752." It is a pamphlet, containi g

Hill was not annihilated by being thrown down so violently on his mother earth; like Anthæus, it rose still fresh; and like Proteus, it assumed new forms. Lady Hill and the young Hills were claimants on his industry far louder than the evanescent epigrams which darted around him: these latter, however, were more numerous than ever dogged an author in his road to literary celebrity *. His science, his ingenuity, and his impudence, once more practised on the credulity of the public, with the innocent quackery of attributing all medicinal virtues to British herbs. He made many walk out, who were too sedentary: they were delighted to cure head-aches by fever-few tea; hectic fevers by the daisy; colics by the leaves of camomile, and agues by its flowers. All these were accompanied by plates of the plants, with the Linnæan names †. This was preparatory to the *Essences* of Sage, *Balsams* of Honey, and *Tinctures* of Valerian. Simple persons imagined they were scientific botanists in their walks, with Hill's plates in their hands. But one of the newly-discovered virtues of British herbs was, undoubtedly, that of placing the discoverer in a chariot.

In an Apology for the character of Sir John Hill, published after his death, where he is painted with much beauty of colouring, and elegance of form, the eruptions and excrescences of his motley physiognomy, while they are indicated,—for they were too visible to be entirely omitted in anything pretending to a resemblance, — are melted down, and even touched into a grace. The Apology is not unskilful, but the real purpose appears in the last page; where we are informed that Lady Hill, fortunately for the world, possesses all his valuable receipts and herbal remedies!

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the amorous correspondence of Hill with a reigning beauty, whom he first saw at Ranelagh. On his first ardent professions he is contemptuously rejected; he perseveres in high passion, and is coldly encouraged; at length he triumphs; and this proud and sullen beauty, in her turn, presents a horrid picture of the passions. Hill then becomes the reverse of what he was; weary of her jealousy, sated with the intercourse, he studiously avoids, and at length rejects her; assigning, for his final argument, his approaching marriage. The work may produce a moral effect, while it exhibits a striking picture of all the misery of illicit connexions: but the scenes are coloured with Ovidian warmth. The original letters were shown at the bookseller's: Hill's were in his own hand-writing, and the lady's in a female hand. But whether Hill was the publisher, as an attempt at notoriety—or the lady admired her own correspondence, which is often exquisitely wrought, is not known.

Hill, in his serious hours, published a large quarto volume, entitled "Thoughts concerning God and Nature, 1755." This work, the result of his scientific knowledge and his moral reasoning, was never undertaken for the purpose of profit. He printed it with the certainty of a considerable loss, from its abstract topics, not obvious to general readers; at a time, too, when a guinea quarto was a very hazardous enterprise. He published it purely from conscientious and religious motives; a circumstance mentioned in that Apology of his Life which we have noticed. The more closely the character of Hill is scrutinised, the more extraordinary appears this man, so often justly contemned, and so often unjustly depreciated.

* It would occupy pages to transcribe epigrams on Hill. One of them alludes to his philosophical as well as his literary character:—

"Hill puffs himself; forbear to chide!
An insect vile and mean
Must first, he knows, be magnified
Before it can be seen."

Garrick's happy lines are well known, on his farces:—

"For physic and farces his equal there scarce is—
His farces are physic, his physic a farce is."

Another said—

"The worse that we wish thee, for all thy vile crimes,
Is to take thy own physic, and read thy own rhymes."

The rejoinder would reverse the wish—

"For, if he takes his physic first,
He'll never read his rhymes."

† Hill says, in his pamphlet on the "Virtues of British Herbs:"—"It will be happy, if, by the same means, the knowledge of plants also becomes more general. The study of them is pleasant, and the exercise of it healthful. He who seeks the herb for its cure, will find it half effected by the walk; and when he is acquainted with the useful kinds, he may be more people's, beside his own, physician."

BOYLE AND BENTLEY.

A faction of Wits at Oxford, the concealed movers of this Controversy—Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE's opinions the ostensible cause; Editions of classical Authors, by young Students at Oxford, the probable one—BOYLE's first attack in the Preface to his Phalaris—BENTLEY, after a silence of three years, betrays his feelings on the literary calumny of BOYLE—BOYLE replies by the "Examination of Bentley's Dissertation"—BENTLEY rejoins by enlarging it—the effects of a contradictory Narrative at a distant time—BENTLEY's suspicions of the origin of the Phalaris, and "The Examination," proved by subsequent facts—BENTLEY's dignity when stung at the ridicule of Dr. KING—applies a classical pun, and nicknames his facetious and caustic Adversary—KING invents an extraordinary Index to dissect the character of BENTLEY—specimens of the Controversy; BOYLE's menace, anathema, and ludicrous humour—BENTLEY's sarcastic reply not inferior to that of the Wits.

THE splendid controversy between BOYLE and BENTLEY was at times a strife of gladiators, and has been regretted as the opprobrium of our literature; but it should be perpetuated to its honour; for it may be considered, on one side at least, as a noble contest of heroism.

The ostensible cause of the present quarrel was inconsiderable; the concealed motive lies deeper; and the party-feelings of the haughty Aristarchus of Cambridge, and a faction of wits at Oxford, under the secret influence of Dean Aldrich, provoked this fierce and glorious contest.

Wit, ridicule, and invective, by cabal and stratagem, obtained a seeming triumph over a single individual, but who, like the Farnesian Hercules, personified the force and resistance of incomparable strength. "The Bees of Christ-Church," as this conspiracy of wits has been called, so musical and so angry, rushed in a dark swarm about him, but only left their fine stings in the flesh they could not wound. He only put out his hand in contempt, never in rage. The Christ-church men, as if doubtful whether wit could prevail against learning, had recourse to the maliciousness of personal satire. They amused an idle public, who could even relish sense and Greek, seasoned as they were with wit and satire, while Boyle was showing how Bentley wanted wit, and Bentley was proving how Boyle wanted learning.

To detect the origin of the controversy, we must find the seed-plot of Bentley's volume in Sir William Temple's "Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning," which he inscribed to his alma mater, the University of Cambridge. Sir William, who had caught the contagion of the prevalent literary controversy of the times, in which the finest geniuses in Europe had entered the lists, imagined that the ancients possessed a greater force of genius, with some peculiar advantages—that the human mind was in a state of decay—and that our knowledge was nothing more than scattered fragments saved out of the general shipwreck. He writes with a premeditated design to dispute the improvements or undervalue the inventions of his own age. Wotton, the friend of Bentley, replied by his curious volume of "Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning." But Sir William, in his ardour, had thrown out an unguarded opinion, which excited the hostile contempt of Bentley. "The oldest books," he says, "we have, are still in their kind the best: the two most ancient that I know of, in prose, are Æsop's Fables and Phalaris's Epistles."—The Epistles, he insists, exhibit every excellence of "a statesman, a soldier, a wit, and a scholar."—That ancient author, who Bentley afterwards asserted was only "some dreaming pedant, with his elbow on his desk."

Bentley, bristled over with Greek, perhaps then considered, that to notice a vernacular and volatile writer, ill assorted with the critic's *Fastus*. But, about this time, Dean Aldrich had set an example to the students of Christ-church, of publishing editions of classical authors. Such juvenile editorships served as an easy admission into the fashionable literature of Oxford. Alsop had pub-

lished the Æsop; and Boyle, among other "young gentlemen," easily obtained the favour of the dean, "to *desire* him to undertake an edition of the Epistles of Phalaris." Such are the modest terms Boyle employs in his reply to Bentley, after he had discovered the unlucky choice he had made of an author.

For this edition of Phalaris it was necessary to collate a MS. in the King's Library; and Bentley, about this time, had become the royal librarian. Boyle did not apply directly to Bentley, but circuitously, by his bookseller, with whom the doctor was not on terms. Some act of civility, or a Mercury more "formose," to use one of his latinisms, was probably expected. The MS. was granted, but the collator was negligent; in six days Bentley reclaimed it, "four hours" had been sufficient for the purpose of collation.

When Boyle's Phalaris appeared, he made this charge in the preface, that having ordered the Epistles to be collated with the MS. in the King's Library, the collator was prevented perfecting the collation by the *singular humanity* of the library-keeper, who refused any further use of the MS.; *pro singulari suâ humanitate negavit:* an expression that sharply hit a man marked by the haughtiness of his manners*.

Bentley, on this insult, informed Boyle of what had passed. He expected that Boyle would have civilly cancelled the page; though he tells us he did not require this, because, "to have insisted on the cancel, might have been forcing a gentleman to too low a submission;"—a stroke of delicacy which will surprise some to discover in the strong character of Bentley. But he was also too haughty to ask a favour, and too conscious of his superiority to betray a feeling of injury. Boyle replied, that the bookseller's account was quite different from the doctor's, who had spoken slightingly of him. Bentley said no more.

Three years had nearly elapsed, when Bentley, in a new edition of his friend Wotton's book, published "A Dissertation on the Epistles of the Ancients;" where, reprehending the false criticism of Sir William Temple, he asserted that the Fables of Æsop and the Epistles of Phalaris were alike spurious. The blow was levelled at Christ-church, and all "the bees" were brushed down in the warmth of their summer-day.

It is remarkable that Bentley kept so long a silence; indeed, he had considered the affair so trivial, that he had preserved no part of the correspondence with Boyle, whom no doubt he slighted as the young editor of a spurious author. But Boyle's edition came forth, as Bentley expresses it, "with a sting in its mouth." This, at first, was like a cut finger—he breathed on it, and would have forgotten it; but the nerve was touched, and the pain raged long after the stroke. Even the great mind of Bentley began to shrink at the touch of literary calumny, so different from the vulgar kind, in its extent and its duration. He betrays the soreness he would wish to conceal, when he complains that "the false story has been spread all over England."

The statement of Bentley produced, in reply, the famous book of Boyle's Examination of Bentley's Dissertation. It opens with an imposing narrative, highly polished, of the whole transaction, with the extraordinary furniture of documents, which had never before entered into a literary controversy—depositions—certificates—affidavits—and private letters. Bentley now rejoined by his enlarged Dissertation on Phalaris, a volume of perpetual value to the lovers of ancient literature, and the memorable preface of which, itself a volume, exhibits another Narrative, entirely differing from Boyle's. These produced new replies and new rejoinders. The whole controversy became so perplexed, that it has frightened away all who have attempted to adjust the particulars. With unanimous consent they give up the cause, as one in which both parties studied only to contradict each other. Such was the fate of a Narrative, which was made out of the recollections of the parties, with all their passions at work, after an interval of three years. In each, the memory seemed only retentive of those passages which best suited their own purpose, and which were precisely those the other party was most likely to have forgotten. What was forgotten, was denied; what was admitted, was made to refer to something else; dialogues were given, which appear never to have been spoken; and incidents described, which are declared never to have taken place; and all this, perhaps, without any purposed violation of truth. Such were the dangers and misunderstandings which attended a Narrative framed out of the broken or passionate

* Haughtiness was the marking feature of Bentley's literary character; and his Wolseyan style and air have been played on by the wits.—Bentley happened to express himself on the King's MS. of Phalaris in a manner their witty malice turned against him. "'Twas a surprise (he said) to find that OUR MS. was not perused."—"OUR MS. (they proceed) that is, his Majesty's and mine! He speaks out now; 'tis no longer the King's, but OUR Ms., *i. e.* Dr. Bentley's and the King's in common, *Ego et Rex meus*—much too familiar for a library-keeper!"—It has been said that Bentley used the same Wolseyan egotism, on Pope's publications:—"This man is always abusing *me* or the *King!*"

recollections of the parties on the watch to confound one another*.

Bentley's Narrative is a most vigorous production: it heaves with the workings of a master-spirit; still reasoning with such force, and still applying with such happiness the stores of his copious literature, had it not been for this literary quarrel, the mere English reader had lost this single opportunity of surveying that commanding intellect.

Boyle's edition of Phalaris was a work of parade, designed to confer on a young man, who bore an eminent name, some distinction in the literary world. But Bentley seems to have been well-informed of the secret transactions at Christ-church. In his first attack he mentions Boyle as "the young gentleman of great hopes, whose name is set to the edition;" and asserts that the editor, no more than his own Phalaris, has written what was ascribed to him. He persists in making a plurality of a pretended unity, by multiplying Boyle into a variety of little personages, of "new editors," our "annotators," our "great geniuses†." Boyle, touched at these reflections, declared "they were levelled at a learned society, in which I had the happiness to be educated; as if Phalaris had been made up by contributions from several hands." Pressed by Bentley to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. John Freind, Boyle confers on him the ambiguous title of "The Director of Studies." Bentley links the Bees together—Dr. Freind and Dr. Alsop. "The Director of Studies, who has lately set out Ovid's Metamorphoses, with a paraphrase and notes, is of the same size for learning with the late editor of the Æsopian Fables. They bring the nation into contempt abroad, and themselves into it at home;" and adds to this magisterial style, the mortification of his criticism on Freind's Ovid, as on Alsop's Æsop.

But Boyle assuming the honours of an Edition of Phalaris, was but a venial offence, compared with that committed by the celebrated Volume published in its defence.

If Bentley's suspicions were not far from the truth, that "the Phalaris had been *made up by contributions*," they approached still closer when they attacked "The Examination of his Dissertation." Such was the assistance which Boyle received from all "the Bees," that scarcely a few ears of that rich sheaf fall to his portion. His efforts hardly reach to the mere narrative of his transactions with Bentley. All the varied erudition, all the Attic graces, all the inexhaust-

* Bentley, in one place, having to give a positive contradiction to the statement of the bookseller, rising in all his dignity and energy, exclaims, "What can be done in this case? Here are two contrary affirmations; and the matter being done in private, neither of us have any witness. I might plead, as Æmilius Scaurus did against one Varius, of Sucro. *Varius Sucronensis ait, Æmilius Scaurus negat. Utri creditis, Quirites?*" p. 21.—The story is told by Valerius Maximus, lib. iii. c. 7. Scaurus was insolently accused by one Varius, a Sucronian, that he had taken bribes from Mithridates: Scaurus addressed the Roman people. "He did not think it just that a man of his age should defend himself against accusations, and before those who were not born when he filled the offices of the republic, nor witnessed the actions he had performed. Varius, the Sucronian, says that Scaurus, corrupted by gold, would have betrayed the republic; Scaurus replies, It is not true. Whom will you believe, fellow-Romans?"—This appeal to the people produced all the effect imaginable, and the ridiculous accuser was silenced.

Bentley points the same application, with even more self-consciousness of his worth, in another part of his preface. It became necessary to praise himself, to remove the odium Boyle and his friends had raised on him—it was a difficulty overcome. "I will once more borrow the form of argument that Æmilius Scaurus used against Varius Sucronensis. Mr. Spanheim and Mr. Grævius give a high character of Dr. B.'s learning: Mr. Boyle gives the meanest that malice can furnish himself with. *Utri creditis, Quirites?*—Whether of the characters will the present age or posterity believe?" p. 82. It was only a truly great mind which could bring itself so close to posterity.

† It was the fashion then to appear very unconcerned about one's literary reputation; but then to be so tenacious about it, when once obtained, as not to suffer, with common patience, even the little finger of criticism to touch it. Boyle, after defending what he calls his "honesty," adds, "the rest *only* touches my learning. This will give me *no concern*, though it may put me to some little trouble. I shall enter upon this with *the indifference of a gamester who plays but for a trifle.*" On this affected indifference, Bentley keenly observes:—"This was entering on his work a little ominously; for a gamester who plays with indifference never plays his game well. Besid that, by this odd comparison, he seems to gi warning, and is as good as his word, that he wi put the dice upon his readers as often as he ca But what is worse than all, this comparison pu one in mind of a general rumour, that there another set of gamesters, who *play him* in h dispute, while themselves are safe behind th curtain."—BENTLEY'S *Dissertation on Phalari* p. 2.

ible wit, are claimed by others; so that Boyle was not materially concerned either in his Phalaris, or in the more memorable Work *.

The Christ-church party now formed a literary conspiracy against the great Critic; and as treason is infectious when the faction is strong, they were secretly engaging new associates.

* Rumours and conjectures are the lot of contemporaries; truth seems reserved only for posterity; and, like the fabled Minerva, she is born of age at once. The secret history of this volume, which partially appeared, has been more particularly opened in one of Warburton's letters, who received it from Pope, who had been "let into the secret."—Boyle wrote the Narrative, "which too was corrected for him." Freind, who wrote the entire Dissertation on Æsop in that volume, wrote also, with Atterbury, the body of the Criticisms; King, the droll argument, proving that Bentley was not the author of his own Dissertation, and the extraordinary index which I shall shortly notice. In Atterbury's Epistolary Correspondence is a Letter, where, with equal anger and dignity, Atterbury avows his having written *about half, and planned the whole*, of Boyle's attack upon Bentley!—With these facts before us, can we read without surprise, if not without indignation, the passage, I shall now quote, from the book to which the name of Boyle is prefixed. In raising an artful charge against Bentley, of appropriating to himself some MS. Notes of Sir Edward Sherburn, Boyle, replying to the argument of Bentley, that Phalaris was the work of some sophist, says:—"The sophists are everywhere pelted by Dr. Bentley, for putting out what they wrote in other men's names; but I did not expect to hear so loudly of it, from one that has so far outdone them; for *I think 'tis much worse to take the honour of another man's book to one's self*, than to entitle one's own book to another man."—P. 16.

I am surprised Bentley did not turn the point of his antagonist's sword on himself, for this flourish was a most unguarded one. But Bentley could not then know so much of the book, "made up by contributions," as ourselves.

Partial truths flew about in rumours at the time; but the friends of a young nobleman, and even his fellow-workmen, seemed concerned that his glory should not be diminished by a ruinous division.—Rymer, in his "Essay concerning Curious and Critical Learning," judiciously surmised its true origin. "I fancy this book was written (as most public compositions in that College are) by a *select club*. Every one seems to have thrown in a repartee or so in his turn; and the most ingenious Dr. Aldrich (he does not deserve the epithet in its most friendly sense) no doubt at their head, smoked and punned plentifully on this occasion." The arrogance of Aldrich exceeded even that of Bentley. Rymer tells further, that Aldrich was notorious for thus employing his "young inexperienced students;" that he "*betrayed* Mr. Boyle into the controversy, and is still involving others in the quarrel." Thus he points at the rival chieftains; one of whom never appeared in public, but was the great mover behind the curtain. These lively wits, so deeply busied among the obscurest writers of antiquity, so much against their will, making up a show of learning against the formidable array of Bentley, exhilarated themselves in their dusty labours, by a perpetual stimulus of keen humour, playful wit, and angry invective. No doubt they were often enraged at bearing the yoke about their luxuriant manes, ploughing the darkest and heaviest soil of antiquity. They had been reared,

"Insultare solo, et gressus glomerare superbos."

Georg. Lib. iii. 117.

"To insult the ground, and proudly pace the plain."—*Trapp.*

Swift, in "The Battle of the Books," who, under his patron, Sir William Temple, was naturally in alliance with "the Bees," with ingenious ambiguity alludes to the glorious manufacture. "Boyle, clad in a suit of armour, *which had been given him by all the* Gods." Still the truth was only floating in rumours and surmises; and the little Boyle had done was not yet known. Lord Orrery, his son, had a difficulty to overcome to pass lightly over this allusion. The literary honour of the family was at stake, and his filial piety was exemplary to a father, who had unfortunately, in passion, deprived his Lordship of the family-library; a stroke from which his sensibility never recovered, and which his enemies ungenerously pointed against him. Lord Orrery, with all the tenderness of a son, and the caution of a politician, observes on "the armour given by the Gods"—"I shall not *dispute* about the *gift* of the armour. The Gods never bestowed celestial armour except upon heroes, whose courage and superior strength distinguished them from the rest of mankind." Most ingeniously he would seem to convert into a classical fable, what was designed as a plain matter of fact!

It does credit to the discernment of Bentley, whose taste was not very lively in English composition, that he pronounced Boyle was *not the author* of the Examination, from *the variety of styles in it.*—P. 107.

Whenever any of the party published anything themselves, they had sworn to have always "a fling at Bentley," and intrigued with their friends to do the same.

They procured Keil, the professor of astronomy, in so grave a work as "The Theory of the Earth," to have a fling at Bentley's boasted sagacity in conjectural criticism. Wotton, in a dignified reproof, administered a spirited correction to the party spirit; while his love of Science induced him generously to commend Keil, and intimate the advantages the world may derive from his studies, "as he grows older." Even Garth and Pope struck in with the alliance, and condescended to pour out rhymes more lasting than even the prose of "the Bees."

But of all the rabid wits who fastening on the prey, never drew their fangs from the noble animal, the facetious Dr. King seems to have been the only one who excited Bentley's anger. Persevering malice, in the teasing shape of caustic banter, seems to have affected the spirit even of Bentley.

At one of those conferences, which passed between Bentley and the bookseller, King happened to be present; and being called on by Boyle to bear his part in the drama, he performed it quite to the taste of "the Bees." He addressed a letter to Dean Aldrich, in which he gave one particular: and, to make up a sufficient dose, dropped some corrosives. He closes his letter thus:—"That scorn and contempt which I have naturally for pride and insolence, makes me remember that which otherwise I might have forgotten." Nothing touched Bentley more to the quick than reflections on "his pride and insolence." Our defects seem to lose much of their character, in reference to ourselves, by habit and natural disposition; yet we have always a painful suspicion of their existence; and he who touches them with no tenderness, is never pardoned. The invective of King had all the bitterness of truth. Bentley applied a line from Horace; which showed that both Horace and Bentley could pun in anger:

"Proscripti *Regis Rupili* pus atque venenum*."—*Sat.* i. 7.

The filth and venom of *Rupilius King*.

The particular incident which King imperfectly recollected, made afterwards much noise among the wits, for giving them a new notion of the nature of ancient MSS. King relates that Dr. Bentley said:—"If the MS. were collated, it would be worth nothing for the future." Bentley, to mortify the pertness of the bookseller, who would not send his publications to the Royal Library, had said that he ought to do so, were it but to make amends for the damage the MS. would sustain by his printing the various readings; "for," added Bentley, "after the various lections were once taken and printed, *the MS. would be like a squeezed orange, and little worth for the future.*" This familiar comparison of a MS. with a squeezed orange, provoked the Epigrammatists. Bentley, in retorting on King, adds some curious facts concerning the fate of MSS. after they have been printed; but is aware, he says, of what little relish or sense the Doctor has of MSS., who is better skilled in "the catalogue of ales, his Humty-Dumty, Hugmatee, Three-threads, and the rest of that glorious list, than in the catalogue of MSS." King, in his banter on Dr. Lister's journey to Paris, had given a list of these English beverages. It was well known that he was in too constant an intercourse with them all. Bentley nicknames King through the progress of his Controversy, for his tavern-pleasures, Humty-Dumty, and accuses him of writing more in a tavern than in a study. He little knew the injustice of his charge against a student who had written notes on 22,000 books and MSS.; but they were not Greek ones.

All this was not done with impunity. An irritated wit only finds his adversary cutting out work for him. A second letter, more abundant with the same pungent qualities, fell on the head of Bentley. King says of the arch critic:—"He thinks meanly, I find, of my reading; yet for all that, I dare say I have read more than any man in England besides *him* and *me*; for I have read his book all over†." Nor was this all: "Humty-

* This short and pointed satire of Horace is merely a pleasant story about a low wretch of the name of King; and Brutus, under whose command he was, is entreated to get rid of him, from his hereditary hatred to *all kings*. I suppose this pun must be considered legitimate, otherwise Horace was an indifferent punster.

† A keen repartee! Yet King could read this mighty volume, as "a vain confused performance," but the learned Dodwell declared to "the Bees of Christ-church," who looked up to him, that "he had never learned so much from any book of the size in his life." King was as unjust to Bentley, as Bentley to King. Men of genius are more subject to "unnatural civil war," than even the blockheads whom Pope sarcastically reproaches with it. The great critic's own notion of his volume seems equally modest and just. "To undervalue this dispute about Phalaris, because it does not suit one's own studies, is to quarrel with a circle, because it is not a square. If the question be not of vulgar use, it was writ therefore for a few; for even the greatest

Dumty" published eleven "Dialogues of the Dead," supposed to be written by a student at Padua, concerning "one Bentivoglio, a very troublesome critic in the world;" where, under the character of "Signior Moderno," Wotton falls into his place. Whether these dialogues mortified Bentley, I know not: they ought to have afforded him very high amusement. But when a man is at once tickled and pinched, the operation requires a gentler temper than Bentley's. "Humty-Dumty," indeed, had Bentley too often before him. There was something like inveteracy in his wit; but he who invented the remarkable index to Boyle's book, must have closely studied Bentley's character. He has given it with all its protuberant individuality*.

Bentley, with his peculiar idiom, had censured "all the stiffness and stateliness, and operoseness of style, quite alien from the character of Phalaris, a man of business and despatch." Boyle keenly turns his own words on Bentley. "*Stiffness and statelinss, and operoseness of style*, is indeed quite *alien from the character of a man of business*; and being but a *library-keeper*, it is not over-modestly done, to oppose his judgment and taste to that of Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE, who knows more of these things than Dr. Bentley does of Hesychius and Suidas. Sir William Temple has spent a good part of his life in transacting affairs of state: he has written to kings, and they to him; and this has qualified him to judge, how kings should write, much better than the *library-keeper at St. James's*."—This may serve as a specimen of the Attic style of the Controversy. Hard words sometimes passed. Boyle complains of some of the *similes* which Bentley employs, more significant than elegant. For the new readings of Phalaris, "he likens me to a bungling tinker, mending old kettles." Correcting the faults of the version, he says, "the first epistle cost me four pages in scouring;" and, "by the help of a Greek proverb, he calls me downright ass." But while Boyle complains of these sprinklings of ink, he himself contributes to Bentley's Collection of Asinine Proverbs, and "throws him in one out of Aristophanes," of "an ass carrying mysteries:" "a proverb, says Erasmus, (as 'the Bees' construe him,) applied to those who were preferred to some place they did not deserve, as when a *dunce* was made a *library-keeper*."

Some ambiguous threats are scattered in the volume, while others are more intelligible. When Bentley, in his own defence, had referred to the opinions which some learned foreigners entertained of him—they attribute these to "the foreigners, because they are foreigners; we, that have the happiness of a nearer conversation with him, know him better; and we may perhaps take an opportunity of setting these mistaken strangers right in their opinions." They threaten him with his character, "in a tongue that will last longer, and go further, than their own;" and, in the imperious style of Festus, adds:—"Since Dr. Bentley has appealed to foreign universities, to foreign universities he must go." Yet this is light, compared with the odium they would raise against him by the menace of the resentments of a whole society of learned men.

"*Single adversaries* die and drop off; but *societies* are immortal: their resentments are sometimes delivered down from hand to hand; and when once they have begun with a man, there is no knowing when they will leave him."

In reply to this literary anathema, Bentley was furnished, by his familiarity with his favourite authors, with a fortunate application of a term, derived from Phalaris himself. Cicero had conveyed his idea of Cæsar's cruelty by this term, which he invented from the very name of the tyrant †.

"There is a certain temper of mind that Cicero calls *Phalarism*; a spirit like Phalaris's. One

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performances, upon the most important subjects, are no entertainment at all to *the many of the world*."—P. 107.

* This index, a very original morsel of literary pleasantry, is at once a satirical character of the great critic, and what it professes to be. I preserve a specimen among the curiosities I am collecting. It is entitled,

"*A Short Account of Dr.* BENTLEY, *by way of Index.*

"Dr. Bentley's true story proved false, by the testimonies of, &c. p. —
" His civil language, p. —
" His nice taste,
in wit, p. —
in style, p. —
in Greek, p. —
in Latin, p. —
in English, p. —
" His modesty and decency in contradicting great men"—a very long list of authors, concluding with "*Everybody:*" p. —
" His familiar acquaintance with books he never saw," p. —
And lastly, "his profound skill in criticism—from beginning to THE END."

Which thus terminates the volume.

† Cicero ad Atticum, Lib. vii., Epist. xii.

would be apt to imagine that a portion of it had descended upon some of his translators. The gentleman has given a broad hint more than once in his book, that if I proceed further against Phalaris, I may draw, perhaps, a duel, or a stab upon myself: a generous threat to a divine, who neither carries arms nor principles fit for that sort of controversy. I expected such usage from the spirit of Phalarism."

In this controversy, the amusing fancy of "the Bees" could not pass by Phalaris without contriving to make some use of that brazen bull by which he tortured men alive. Not satisfied in their motto, from the Earl of Roscommon, with wedging "the great critic, like Milo, in the timber he strove to rend," they gave him a second death in their finis, by throwing Bentley into Phalaris's bull, and flattering their vain imaginations that they heard him "bellow."

"He has defied Phalaris, and used him very coarsely, under the assurance, as he tells us, that 'he is out of his reach.' Many of Phalaris's enemies thought the same thing, and repented of their vain confidence afterwards in his *bull*. Dr. Bentley is perhaps, by this time, or will be suddenly, satisfied that he also has presumed a little too much upon his distance; but it will be too late to repent when he begins to bellow *."

Bentley, although the solid force of his mind was not favourable to the lighter sports of wit, yet was not quite destitute of those airy qualities; nor does he seem insensible to the literary merits of "that odd work," as he calls Boyle's volume, which he conveys a very good notion of:—"If his book shall happen to be preserved anywhere as an useful common-place book for ridicule, banter, and all the topics of calumny." With equal dignity and sense he observes on the ridicule so freely used by both parties—"I am content that what is the greatest virtue of his book should be counted the greatest fault of mine."

His reply to "Milo's fate," and the tortures he was supposed to pass through when thrown into Phalaris's bull, is a piece of sarcastic humour which will not suffer by comparison with the volume more celebrated for its wit.

"The facetious 'Examiner' seems resolved to vie with Phalaris himself in the science of *Phalarism*; for his revenge is not satisfied with one single death of his adversary, but he will kill me over and over again. He has slain me twice by two several deaths! one, in the first page of his book; and another, in the last. In the title-page I die the death of Milo, the Crotonian:—

——"Remember Milo's end,
Wedged in that timber which he strove to rend."

"The application of which must be this:—That as Milo, after his victories at six several Olympiads, was at last conquered and destroyed in wrestling with a *tree*, so I, after I had attained to some small reputation in letters, am to be quite baffled and run down by *wooden antagonists*. But in the end of his book, he has got me into Phalaris's bull; and he has the pleasure of fancying that he hears me *begin to bellow*. Well, since it is certain that I am in the bull, I have performed the part of a sufferer. For as the cries of the tormented in old Phalaris's bull, being conveyed through pipes lodged in the machine, were turned into music for the entertainment of the tyrant, so the complaints which my torments express from me, being conveyed to Mr. Boyle by this answer, are all dedicated to his pleasure and diversion. But yet, methinks, when he was setting up to be *Phalaris junior*, the very omen of it might have deterred him. As the old tyrant himself, at last, bellowed in his own bull, his imitators ought to consider, that at long run their own actions may chance to overtake them."—P. 43.

Wit, however, enjoyed the temporary triumph: not but that some, in that day, loudly protested against the award†. "The Episode of Bentley and Wotton," in "The Battle of the Books," is conceived with all the caustic imagination of the first of our prose satirists. There Bentley's great

* No doubt, this idea was the origin of that satirical Capriccio, which closed in a most fortunate pun—a literary caricature, where the doctor is represented in the hands of Phalaris's attendants, who are putting him into the tyrant's bull, while Bentley exclaims, "I had rather be *roasted* than *Boyled*."

† Sir Richard Blackmore, in his bold attempt at writing "A Satire against Wit," in utter defiance of it, without any however, conveys some opinions of the times. He there paints the great critic, "crowned with applause," seated amidst "the spoils of ruined wits:"—

"Till his rude strokes had thresh'd the empty sheaf,
Methought there had been something else than chaff."

Boyle, not satisfied with the undeserved celebrity conceded to his volume, ventured to write poetry, in which no one appears to have suspected the aid of "The Bees."—

"See a fine scholar sunk by wit in Boyle!
After his foolish rhymes, both friends and foes
Conclude they know *who did not write his prose*."

A Satire against Wit.

qualities are represented as "tall, without shape or comeliness; large, without strength or proportion." His various erudition, as "armour patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces;" his book, as "the sound" of that armour, "loud and dry, like that made by the fall of a sheet of lead from the roof of some steeple;" his haughty intrepidity, as "a vizor of brass, tainted by his breath, corrupted into copperas, nor wanted gall from the same fountain; so that, whenever provoked by anger or labour, an atramentous quality of most malignant nature was seen to distil from his lips." Wotton is "heavy-armed and slow of foot, lagging behind." They perish together in one ludicrous death. Boyle, in his celestial armour, by a stroke of his weapon, transfixes both "the lovers," "as a cook trusses a brace of woodcocks, with iron skewer piercing the tender sides of both. Joined in their lives, joined in their death, so closely joined, that Charon would mistake them both for one, and waft them over Styx for half his fare." Such is the candour of wit! The great qualities of an adversary, as in Bentley, are distorted into disgraceful attitudes; while the suspicious virtues of a friend, as in Boyle, not passed over in prudent silence, are ornamented with even spurious panegyric.

Garth, catching the feeling of the time, sung—

"And to a Bentley 'tis we owe a Boyle."

Posterity justly appreciates the volume of Bentley for its stores of ancient literature; and the author, for that peculiar sagacity in emending a corrupt text, which formed his distinguishing characteristic as a classical critic; and since his book but for this literary quarrel had never appeared, reverses the names in the verse of the Satirist.

PARKER AND MARVELL.

MARVELL the founder of "a newly-refined art of jeering buffoonery"—his knack of nick-naming his adversaries—PARKER'S Portrait—PARKER suddenly changes his principles—his declamatory style—MARVELL prints his anonymous letter as a motto to "The Rehearsal Transprosed"—describes him as "an At-all"—MARVELL'S ludicrous description of the whole posse of answers summoned together by PARKER—MARVELL'S cautious allusion to MILTON—his solemn invective against PARKER—anecdote of MARVELL and PARKER—PARKER retires after the second part of "The Rehearsal transprosed"—The Recreant, reduced to silence, distils his secret vengeance in a posthumous libel.

ONE of the legitimate ends of Satire, and one of the proud triumphs of Genius, is to unmask the false zealot; to beat back the haughty spirit that is treading down all; and if it cannot teach modesty, and raise a blush, at least to inflict terror and silence. It is then that the Satirist does honour to the office of the executioner.

"As one whose whip of steel can with a lash
Imprint the characters of shame so deep,
Even in the brazen forehead of proud Sin,
That not Eternity shall wear it out." *

The quarrel between PARKER and MARVELL is a striking example of the efficient powers of genius, in first humbling, and then annihilating, an unprincipled bravo, who had placed himself at the head of a faction.

Marvell, the under-secretary and the bosom-friend of Milton, whose fancy he has often caught in his verse, was one of the greatest wits of the luxuriant age of Charles II.; he was a master in all the arts of ridicule; and his inexhaustible spirit only required some permanent subject to have rivalled the causticity of Swift, whose style, in neatness and vivacity, seems to have been modelled on his †. But Marvell placed the oblation of genius on a temporary altar, and the sacrifice sunk with it; he wrote to the times, and with the times his writings have passed away; yet something there is incorruptible in wit, and wherever its salt has fallen, that part is still preserved.

Such are the vigour and fertility of Marvell's writings, that our old Chronicler of Literary History, Anthony Wood, considers him as the founder of "the then newly-refined art (though much in mode and fashion almost ever since) of sportive and jeering buffoonery ‡;" and the

* Randolph's Muses' Looking-glass. *Act* 1, *Scene* 4.

† Swift certainly admired, if he did not imitate Marvell: for in his "Tale of a Tub" he says, "We still read Marvell's answer to Parker with pleasure, though the book it answers be sunk long ago."

‡ This is a curious remark of Wood's: how came raillery and satire to be considered as "a newly-refined art?" Has it not, at all periods, been prevalent among every literary people? The remark is, however, more founded on truth than it appears, and arose from Wood's own feelings. Wit and Raillery had been so strange to us during the gloomy period of the fanatic Commonwealth, that honest Anthony, whose prejudices did not run in favour of Marvell, not only considers him as the "restorer of this newly-refined art," but as one "hugely versed in it," and acknowledges all its efficacy in the complete discomfiture of his haughty rival. Besides this, *a small book* of controversy, such as Marvell's usually are, was another novelty—the "aureoli libelli," as one fondly calls his precious books, were in the wretched taste of the times, rhapsodies in folio. The reader has doubtless heard of Caryll's endless "Commentary on Job," consisting of 2400 folio pages! in small type. Of that monument of human perseverance, which commenting on Job's patience, inspired what few works do to whoever read them, the exercise of the virtue it inculcated, the publisher, in his advertisement in Clavel's Catalogue of Books, 1681, announces the two folios in 600 sheets each! these were a republication of the first edition, in twelve volumes quarto! he apolo-

crabbed humorist describes "this pen-combat as briskly managed on both sides; a jerking flirting way of writing entertaining the reader, by seeing two such right cocks of the game so keenly engaging with sharp and dangerous weapons."—Burnet calls Marvell "the liveliest droll of the age, who writ in a burlesque strain, but with so peculiar and entertaining a conduct, that from the king to the tradesman, his books were read with great pleasure." Charles II. was a more polished judge than these uncouth critics; and, to the credit of his impartiality, for that witty monarch and his dissolute court were never spared by Marvell, who remained inflexible to his seduction, he deemed Marvell the best Prose Satirist of the age. But Marvell had other qualities than the freest humour and the finest wit in this "newly-refined art," which seems to have escaped these grave critics—a vehemence of solemn reproof, and an eloquence of invective, that awes one with the spirit of the modern Junius, and may give some notion of that more ancient satirist, whose writings are said to have so completely answered their design, that, after perusal, their victim hanged himself on the first tree; and in the present case, though the delinquent did not lay violent hands on himself, he did what, for an author, may be considered as desperate a course, "withdraw from the town, and cease writing for some years*."

The celebrated work here to be noticed is Marvell's "Rehearsal Transprosed;" a title facetiously adopted from Bayes in "The Rehearsal Transposed" of the Duke of Buckingham. It was written against the works and the person of Dr. Samuel Parker, afterwards Bishop of Oxford, whom he designates under the character of Bayes, to denote the incoherence and ridiculousness of his character. Marvell had a peculiar knack of calling names,—it consisted in appropriating a ludicrous character in some popular comedy, and dubbing his adversaries with it. In the same spirit he ridiculed Dr. Turner of Cambridge, a brother-genius to Parker, by nicknaming him "Mr. Smirk, the Divine in Mode," the name of the Chaplain in Etherege's "Man of Mode," and thus, by a stroke of the pen, conveyed an idea of "a neat, starched, formal, and forward Divine." This application of a fictitious character to a real one, this christening a man with ridicule, though of no difficult invention, is not a little hazardous to inferior writers; for it requires not less wit than Marvell's to bring out of the real character, the ludicrous features which mark the factitious prototype.

Parker himself must have his portrait, and if the likeness be justly hit off, some may be reminded of a resemblance. Mason applies the epithet of "Mitred Dullness" to him: but although he was at length reduced to railing and to menaces, and finally mortified into silence, this epithet does not suit so hardy and so active an adventurer.

The secret history of Parker may be collected in Marvell†; and his more public one in our honest chronicler, Anthony Wood. Parker was originally educated in strict sectarian principles; a starch Puritan, "fasting and praying with the Presbyterian students weekly, and who, for their refection feeding only on thin broth made of oatmeal and water, were commonly called *Gruellers*." Among these, says Marvell, "it was observed that he was wont to put more graves than all the rest into his porridge," and was deemed one of the *preciousest* ‡ young men in the University." It seems that these mortified saints, both the brotherhood and the sisterhood, held their chief meetings at the house of "Bess Hampton, an old and crooked maid that drove the trade of laundry, who being from her youth very much given to the godly party, as they call themselves, had frequent meetings, especially for those that were her customers." Such is the dry humour of honest Anthony, who paints like the Ostade of literary history.

But the age of sectarism and thin gruel was losing all its coldness in the sunshine of the Restoration; and this "preciousest young man," from praying and caballing against episcopacy, suddenly acquainted the world in one of his dedications, that Dr. Ralph Bathurst had "rescued him from the chains and fetters of an unhappy education," and, without any intermediate apology, from a sullen sectarian turned a flaming highflyer for the "supreme dominion" of the church §.

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gises that "it hath been *so long a doing*, to the great vexation and loss of the proposer." He adds, "indeed, *some few lines*, no more than what may be contained *in a quarto page*, are expunged, *they not relating to the Exposition*, which nevertheless some, by malicious prejudice, have so unjustly aggravated, as if the whole work had been disordered." He apologises for curtailing *a few lines* from 2400 folio pages! and he considered that these few lines were the only ones that did not relate to the Exposition! At such a time, the little books of Marvell must have been considered as relishing morsels after such indigestible surfeits.

* So Burnet tells us.

† See "The Rehearsal Transprosed, the second part," p. 76.

‡ One of the canting terms used by the saints of those days, and not obsolete in the dialect of those who still give themselves out to be saints in the present.

§ Marvell admirably describes Parker's journey

It is the after-conduct of Parker that throws light on this rapid change. On speculative points any man may be suddenly converted; for these may depend on facts or arguments which might never have occurred to him before. But when we watch the weathercock chopping with the wind, so pliant to move, and so stiff when fixed,—when we observe this "preciousest grueller" clothed in purple, and equally hardy in the most opposite measures,—become a favourite with James II., and a furious advocate for arbitrary power; when we see him railing at and menacing those among whom he had committed as many extravagances as any of them *; can we hesitate to decide that this bold, haughty, and ambitious man, was one of those who, having neither religion nor morality for a casting weight, can easily fly off to opposite extremes; and whether a puritan or a bishop, we must place his zeal to the same side of his religious ledger—that of the profits of barter!

The quarrel between Parker and Marvell originated in a preface †, written by Parker, in which he had poured down his contempt and abuse on his old companions, the nonconformists. It was then Marvell clipped his wings with his "Rehearsal Transprosed;" his wit and humour were finely contrasted with Parker's extravagances, set off in his declamatory style; of which Marvell wittily describes "the volume and circumference of the periods, which, though he takes always to be his chiefest strength, yet, indeed, like too great a line, weakens the defence, and requires too many men to make it good." The tilt was now opened, and certain masqued knights appeared in the course; they attempted to grasp the sharp and polished weapon of Marvell, to turn it on himself ‡. But Marvell, with malicious ingenuity,

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to London at the Restoration, where "he spent a considerable time in creeping into all corners and companies, horoscoping up and down concerning the duration of the government." This term, so expressive of his political doubts, is from "Judicial Astrology," then a prevalent study. "Not considering anything as best, but as most lasting and most profitable; and after having many times cast a figure, he at last satisfied himself that the episcopal government would endure as long as this king lived, and from thenceforwards cast about to find the highway to preferment. To do this, he daily enlarged not only his conversation but his conscience, and was made free of some of the town-vices; imagining, like Muleasses, King of Tunis (for I take witness that on all occasions I treat him rather above his quality than otherwise), that by hiding himself among the onions he should escape being traced by his perfumes." The narrative proceeds with a curious detail of all his sycophantic attempts at seducing useful patrons, among whom was the Archbishop of Canterbury. Then began "those pernicious books," says Marvell, "in which he first makes all that he will to be law, and then whatsoever is law, to be divinity." Parker, in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," came at length to promulgate such violent principles as these, "He openly declares his submission to the government of a Nero and a Caligula, rather than suffer a dissolution of it." He says, "it is absolutely necessary to set up a more severe government over men's consciences and religious persuasions than over their vices and immoralities;" and that "men's vices and debaucheries may be more safely indulged than their consciences." Is it not difficult to imagine that this man had once been an Independent, the advocate for every congregation being independent of a bishop or a synod?

* Parker's father was a lawyer, and one of Oliver's most submissive sub-committee men, who so long pillaged the nation and spilled its blood, "not in the hot and military way (which diminishes always the offence), but in the cooler blood and sedentary execution of an high court of justice." He wrote a very remarkable book (after he had been petitioned against for a misdemeanour) in defence of that usurped irregular state called "The Government of the People of England." It had "a most hieroglyphical title" of several emblems: two hands joined, and beneath a sheaf of arrows, stuffed about with half-a-dozen mottoes, "enough," says Marvell, "to have supplied the mantlings and achievement of this (godly) family." An anecdote in this secret history of Parker is probably true. "He shortly afterwards did inveigh against his father's memory, and in his mother's presence, before witnesses, for a couple of whining fanatics."—*Rehearsal Transprosed, second part*, p. 75.

† This preface was prefixed to Bishop Bramhall's "Vindication of the Bishops from the Presbyterian Charge of Popery."

‡ As a specimen of what old Anthony calls "a jerking flirting way of writing," I transcribe the titles of these answers which Marvell received. As Marvell had nicknamed Parker, Bayes, the quaint humour of one, entitled his reply, "Rosemary and Bayes;" another, "The Transprosed Rehearsed, or the Fifth Act of Mr. Bayes's Play;" another, "Gregory Father Greybeard, with his Vizard off;" another formed "a Common-place Book out of the Rehearsal, digested under heads;" and, lastly, "Stoo him Bayes, or some Animadversions on the Humour of writing Rehearsals."—*Biog. Brit.* p. 3055.

This was the very Bartlemy-fair of wit!

sees Parker in them all—they so much resembled their master! "There were no less," says the wit, "than six scaramouches together on the stage, all of them of the same gravity and behaviour, the same tone, the same habit, that it was impossible to discern which was the true author of the 'Ecclesiastical Polity.' I believe he imitated the wisdom of some other princes, who have sometimes been persuaded by their servants to disguise several others in the regal garb, that the enemy might not know in the battle whom to single." Parker, in fact, replied to Marvell anonymously, by "A Reproof to the Rehearsal transprosed," with a mild exhortation to the magistrate to crush with the secular arm the pestilent wit, the servant of Cromwell, and the friend of Milton. But this was not all; something else, anonymous too, was despatched to Marvell: it was an extraordinary letter, short enough to have been an epigram, could Parker have written one; but short as it was, it was more in character, for it was only a threat of assassination! It concluded with these words: "If thou darest to print any lie or libel against Dr. Parker, by the Eternal God I will cut thy throat." Marvell replied to "the Reproof," which he calls a printed letter, by the second part of "the Rehearsal transprosed;" and to the unprinted letter, by publishing it on his own title-page.

Of two volumes of wit and broad humour, and of the most galling invective, one part flows so much into another, that the volatile spirit would be injured by an analytical process. But Marvell is now only read by the curious lovers of our literature, who find the strong, luxuriant, though not the delicate, wit of the wittiest age, never obsolete: the reader shall not, however, part from Marvell without some slight transplantations from a soil whose rich vegetation breaks out in every part.

Of the pleasantry and sarcasm, these may be considered as specimens. Parker was both author and licenser of his own work on "Ecclesiastical Polity*;" and it appears he got the licence for printing Marvell's first "Rehearsal" recalled. The church appeared in danger when the doctor discovered he was so furiously attacked. Marvell sarcastically rallies him on his dual capacity:—

"He is such an *At-all*, of so many capacities, that he would excommunicate any man who should have presumed to intermeddle with any one of his provinces. Has he been an author? he is too the licenser. Has he been a father? he will stand too for godfather. Had he acted *Pyramus*, he would have been *Moonshine* too, and the *Hole in the Wall*. That first author of 'Ecclesiastical Polity,' (such as his) Nero, was of the same temper. He could not be contented with the Roman empire, unless he were too his own precentor; and lamented only the detriment that mankind must sustain at his death, in losing so considerable a fiddler."

The Satirist describes Parker's arrogance for those whom Parker calls the vulgar, and whom he defies as "a rout of wolves and tigers, apes and buffoons;" yet his personal fears are oddly contrasted with his self-importance: "If he chance but to sneeze, he prays that the *foundations of the earth* be not shaken.—Ever since he crept up to be but the *weathercock of a steeple*, he trembles and cracks at every puff of wind that blows about him, as if the *Church of England* were falling." Parker boasted, in certain philosophical "Tentamina," or essays of his, that he had confuted the atheists: Marvell declares, "If he hath reduced any atheist by his book, he can only pretend to have converted them (as in the old Florentine wars) by mere tiring them out, and perfect weariness." A pleasant allusion to those mock fights of the Italian mercenaries, who, after parading all day, rarely unhorsed a single cavalier.

Marvell blends with a ludicrous description of his answerers, great fancy:—

"The whole *Posse Archidiaconatus* was raised to repress me; and great riding there was, and sending post every way to pick out the ablest ecclesiastical droles to prepare an answer. Never was such a hubbub made about a sorry book. One flattered himself with being at least a surrogate; another was so modest as to set up with being but a paritor; while the most generous hoped only to be graciously smiled upon at a good dinner; but the more hungry starvelings generally looked upon it as an immediate call to a benefice; and he that could but write an answer, whatsoever it were, took it for the most dexterous, cheap, and legal way of simony. As is usual on these occasions, there arose no small competition and mutiny among the pretenders."

It seems all the body had not impudence enough, and had too nice consciences, and could not afford an extraordinary expense in wit for the occasion. It was then

"The author of the 'Ecclesiastical Polity' altered his lodgings to a calumny-office, and kept open chamber for all comers, that he might be supplied himself, or supply others, as there was occasion. But the information came in so slenderly, that he was glad to meka use of any-

* The title will convey some notion of its intolerant principles: "A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Polity, wherein the authority of the Civil Magistrate *over the Consciences of Subjects*, in matters of external Religion, is asserted."

thing rather than sit out; and there was at last nothing so slight, but it grew material; nothing so false, but he resolved it should go for truth; and what wanted in matter, he would make out with invention and artifice. So that he and his remaining comrades seemed to have set up a glass-house, the model of which he had observed from the height of his window in the neighbourhood, and the art he had been initiated into ever since from the manufacture (he will criticise because not orifacture) of *soap-bubbles*, he improved by degrees to the mystery of making *glass-drops*, and thence, in running leaps, mounted by these virtues to be Fellow of the Royal Society, Doctor of Divinity, Parson, Prebend, and Archdeacon. The furnace was so hot of itself, that there needed no coals, much less any one to blow them. One burnt the weed, another calcined the flint, a third melted down that mixture; but he himself fashioned all with his breath, and polished with his style, till, out of a mere jelly of sand and ashes, he had furnished a whole cupboard of things, so brittle and incoherent, that the least touch would break them again in pieces, and so transparent, that every man might see through them."

Parker had accused Marvell with having served Cromwell, and being the friend of Milton, then living, at a moment when such an accusation not only rendered a man odious, but put his life in danger. Marvell, who now perceived that Milton, whom he never looked on but with the eyes of reverential awe, was likely to be drawn into his quarrel, touches on this subject with infinite delicacy and tenderness, but not with diminished energy against his malignant adversary, whom he shows to have been an impertinent intruder in Milton's house, where indeed he had first known him. He cautiously alludes to our English Homer by his initials: at that moment the very name of Milton would have tainted the page!

"J. M. was, and is, a man of great learning and sharpness of wit, as any man. It was his misfortune, living in a tumultuous time, to be tossed on the wrong side; and he writ, *flagrante bello*, certain dangerous treatises. But some of his books, upon which you take him at advantage, were of no other nature than that one writ by your own father; only with this difference, that your father's, which I have by me, was written with the same design, but with much less wit or judgment, for which there was no remedy, unless you will supply his judgment with his high Court of Justice. At his Majesty's happy return, J. M. did partake, even as you yourself did, for all your huffing, of his royal clemency, and has ever since expiated himself in a retired silence. Whether it were my foresight, or my good fortune, I never contracted any friendship or confidence with you; but then, it was, you frequented J. M. incessantly, and haunted his house day by day. What discourses you there used, he is too generous to remember. But for you to insult over his old age, to traduce him by your scaramouches, and in your own person, as a schoolmaster, who was born and hath lived more ingenuously and liberally than yourself!"

Marvell, when he lays by his playful humour and fertile fancy, for more solemn remonstrances, assumes a loftier tone, and a severity of invective, from which, indeed, Parker never recovered.

Accused by Parker of aiming to degrade the Clerical character, Marvell declares his veneration for that holy vocation, and that he reflected even on the failings of the men, from whom so much is expected, with indulgent reverence:—

"Their virtues are to be celebrated, with all encouragement; and if their vices be not notoriously palpable, let the eye, as it defends its organ, so conceal the object by connivance." But there are cases, when even to write satirically against a clergyman, may be not only excusable, but necessary:—"The man who gets into the Church by the belfry or the window, ought never to be borne in the pulpit; and so the man who illustrates his own corrupt doctrines with as ill a conversation, and adorns the lasciviousness of his life with an equal petulancy of style and language."—In such a concurrence of misdemeanors, what is to be done? The example and the consequence so pernicious! which could not be, "if our great pastors but exercise the wisdom of common shepherds, by parting with one, to stop the infection of the whole flock, when his rottenness grows notorious. Or if our clergy would but use the instinct of other creatures, and chase the blown deer out of their herd, such mischiefs might easily be remedied. In this case it is, that I think a clergyman is laid open to the pen of any one that knows how to manage it; and that every person who has either wit, learning, or sobriety, is licensed, if debauched, to curb him; if erroneous, to catechise him; and if foul-mouthed and biting, to muzzle him.—Such an one would never have come into the church, but to take sanctuary; rather wheresoever men shall find the footing of so wanton a satyr out of his own bounds, the neighbourhood ought, notwithstanding all his pretended capering divinity, to hunt him through the woods, with hounds and horse, home to his harbour."

And he frames an ingenious apology for the freedom of his humour, in this attack on the morals and person of his adversary:—

"To write against him (says Marvell) is the odiousest task that ever I undertook, and has looked to me all the while like the cruelty of a living dissection; which, however it may tend to

public instruction, and though I have picked out the most noxious creature to be anatomised, yet doth scarce excuse the offensiveness of the scent and fouling of my fingers: therefore, I will here break off abruptly, leaving many a vein not laid open, and many a passage not searched into. But if I have undergone the drudgery of the most loathsome part already (which is his personal character), I will not defraud myself of what is more truly pleasant, the conflict with, if it may be so called, his reason.—"

It was not only in these "pen-combats" that this Literary Quarrel proceeded; it seems also to have broken out in the streets; for a tale has been preserved of a rencontre, which shows at once the brutal manners of Parker and the exquisite wit of Marvell. Parker meeting Marvell in the streets, the bully attempted to shove him from the wall: but, even there, Marvell's agility contrived to lay him sprawling in the kennel; and looking on him pleasantly, told him to "lie there for a son of a whore!" Parker complained to the Bishop of Rochester, who immediately sent for Marvell, to reprimand him; but he maintained that the Doctor had so called himself, in one of his recent publications; and pointing to the Preface, where Parker declares "he is 'a true son of his mother, the Church of England:' and if you read farther on, my lord, you find he says: 'The Church of England has spawned two bastards, the Presbyterians and the Congregationists;' ergo, my lord, he expressly declares that he is the *son of a whore!*"

Although Parker retreated from any further attack, after the second part of "The Rehearsal transprosed," he in truth only suppressed passions to which he was giving vent, in secrecy and silence. That, indeed, was not discovered till a posthumous Work of his appeared, in which one of the most striking parts is a most disgusting caricature of his old antagonist. Marvell was, indeed, a republican, the pupil of Milton, and adored his master: but his morals and his manners were Roman—he lived on the turnip of Curtius, and he would have bled at Philippi. We do not sympathise with the fierce republican spirit of those unhappy times that scalped the head, feebly protected by a mitre or a crown. But the private virtues and the rich genius of such a man are pure from the taint of party. We are now to see how far private hatred can distort, in its hideous vengeance, the resemblance it affects to give after nature. Who could imagine that Parker is describing Marvell in these words?—

"Among these insolent revilers of great fame for ribaldry, was one Marvell. From his youth, he lived in all manner of wickedness; and thus, with a singular petulancy from nature, he performed the office of a satirist for the faction, not so much from the quickness of his wit, as from the sourness of his temper. A vagabond, ragged, hungry poetaster, beaten at every tavern, where he daily received the rewards of his impudence in kicks and blows*. By the interest of Milton, to whom he was somewhat agreeable for his malignant wit, he became the under-secretary to Cromwell's secretary."

And elsewhere he calls him "a drunken buffoon," and asserts that "he made his conscience more cheap than he had formerly made his reputation;" but the familiar anecdote of Marvell's political honesty, when, wanting a dinner, he declined the gold sent to him by the king, sufficiently replies to the calumniator. Parker, then in his retreat, seems not to have been taught anything like modesty by his silence, as Burnet conjectured; who says, "that a face of brass must grow red, when it is burnt as his was." It was even then that the recreant, in silence, was composing the libel, which his cowardice dared not publish, but which his invincible malice has sent down to posterity.

* Vanus, pannosus, et famelicus poetaster œnopolis quovis vapulans, fuste et calce indies petulantiæ pœnas tulit—are the words in Parker's "*De Rebus sui Temporis Commentariorum.*"—P. 275.

D'AVENANT

AND A CLUB OF WITS.

Calamities of Epic Poets—Character and Anecdotes of D'Avenant—attempts a new vein of invention—the Critics marshalled against each other on the Gondibert—D'Avenant's sublime feelings of Literary Fame—attacked by a Club of Wits, in two books of Verses—the strange misconception hitherto given respecting the Second Part—various specimens of the Satires on Gondibert, the Poet, and his Panegyrist Hobbes—the Poet's silence; and his neglect of the unfinished Epic, while the Philosopher keenly retorts on the Club, and will not allow of any authority in Wit.

The memoirs of Epic Poets, in as far as they relate to the history of their own epics, would be the most calamitous of all the suitors of the Muses, whether their works have reached us, or scarcely the names of the poets. An epic, which has sometimes been the labour of a life, is the game of the wits and the critics. One ridicules what is written; the other censures for what has not been written;—and it has happened, in some eminent instances, that the rudest assailants of him who "builds the lofty rime," have been his ungenerous contemporaries. Men, whose names are now endeared to us, and who have left their ΚΤΗΜΑ ΕΣ ΑΕΙ, which Hobbes so energetically translates "a possession for everlasting," have bequeathed an inheritance to posterity, of which they have never been in the receipt of the revenue. "The first fruits" of genius have been too often gathered to place upon its tomb. Can we believe that Milton did not endure mortification from the neglect of "evil days," as certainly as Tasso was goaded to madness by the systematic frigidity of his critics? He who is now before us had a mind not less exalted than Milton or Tasso; but was so effectually ridiculed, that he has only sent us down the fragment of a great work.

One of the curiosities in the history of our poetry, is the Gondibert of D'Avenant; and the fortunes and the fate of this epic are as extraordinary as the poem itself. Never has an author deserved more copious memoirs than the fertility of this man's genius claims. His life would have exhibited a moving picture of genius in action and in contemplation. With all the infirmities of lively passions, he had all the redeeming virtues of magnanimity and generous affections; but with the dignity and the powers of a great genius, falling among an age of wits, he was covered by ridicule. D'Avenant was a man who had viewed human life in all its shapes, and had himself taken them. A poet and a wit, the creator of the English stage with the music of Italy and the scenery of France; a soldier, an emigrant, a courtier, and a politician:—he was, too, a state-prisoner, awaiting death with his immortal poem in his hand*; and at all times a philosopher!

* D'Avenant commenced his poem during his exile at Paris. The preface is dated from the Louvre; the postscript, from Cowes Castle, in the Isle of Wight, where he was then confined, expecting his immediate execution. The poem, in the first edition, 1651, is therefore abruptly concluded. There is something very affecting and great in his style on this occasion. "I am here arrived at the middle of the third book. But it is high time to strike sail and cast anchor, though I have run but half my course, when at the helm I am threatened with *death*; who, though he can visit us but once, seems troublesome; and even in the innocent, may beget such a gravity, as diverts the music of verse. Even in a worthy design, I shall ask leave to desist, when I am interrupted by so great an experiment as *dying*;—and 'tis an experiment to the most experienced; for no man (though his mortifications may be much greater than mine) can say, *he has already died*."—D'Avenant is said to have written a letter to Hobbes about this time, giving some account of his progress in the third book. "But why (said he) should I trouble you or myself with these thoughts, when I am pretty certain I shall be hanged next week?"—A stroke of the gaiety of temper of a very thoughtful mind; for D'Avenant,

That hardiness of enterprise which had conducted him through life, brought the same novelty, and conferred on him the same vigour, in literature.

D'Avenant attempted to open a new vein of invention in narrative poetry; which not to call *epic*, he termed *heroic*; and which we who have more completely emancipated ourselves from the arbitrary mandates of Aristotle and Bossu, have since styled romantic. Scott, Southey, and Byron have taught us this freer scope of invention, but characterised by a depth of passion which is not found in D'Avenant. In his age, the title which he selected to describe the class of his poetical narrative, was a miserable source of petty criticism. It was decreed, that every poem should resemble another poem, on the plan of the ancient epic. This was the golden age of "the poet-apes," till they found that it was easier to produce epic writers than epic readers.

But our poet, whose manly genius had rejected one great absurdity, had the folly to adopt another. The first reformers are always more heated with zeal than enlightened by sagacity. The four-and-twenty chapters of an epic, he perceived, were but fantastical divisions, and probably, originally, but accidental; yet he proposed another form, as chimerical; he imagined that by having only five, he was constructing his poem on the dramatic plan of five acts. He might with equal propriety have copied the Spanish comedy which I once read, in twenty-five acts, and in no slender folio. "Sea-marks (says D'Avenant, alluding to the works of antiquity) are chiefly useful to *coasters*, and serve not those who have the ambition of *discoverers*, that love to sail in untried seas;" and yet he was attempting to turn an epic poem into a monstrous drama, from the servile habits he had contracted from his intercourse with the theatre! This error of the poet has, however, no material influence on the Gondibert, as it has come down to us; for, discouraged and ridiculed, our adventurer never finished his voyage of discovery. He who had so nobly vindicated the freedom of the British Muse from the meanness of imitation, and clearly defined what such a narrative as he intended should be, "a perfect glass of nature, which gives us a familiar and easy view of ourselves," did not yet perceive that there is no reason why a poetical narrative should be cast into any particular form, or be longer or shorter than the interest it excites will allow.

More than a century and a half have elapsed since the first publication of Gondibert, and its merits are still a subject of controversy; an indubitable proof of some inherent excellence not willingly forgotten. The critics are marshalled on each side, one against the other, while between these formidable lines stands the poet, with a few scattered readers*; but what is more surprising in the history of the Gondibert, the poet is a great poet, the work imperishable!

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with all his wit and fancy, has made the profoundest reflections on human life.

The reader may be interested to know, that after D'Avenant's removal from Cowes to the Tower, to be tried, his life was saved by the gratitude of two aldermen of York, whom he had obliged. It is delightful to believe the story told by Bishop Newton, that D'Avenant owed his life to Milton; Wood, indeed, attributes our poet's escape to both; at the Restoration D'Avenant interposed, and saved Milton. Poets, after all, envious as they are to a brother, are the most generously-tempered of men: they libel, but they never hang; they will indeed throw out a sarcasm on the man whom they saved from being hanged. "Please your Majesty," said Sir John Denham, "do not hang George Withers—that it may not be said I am the worst poet alive."

* It would form a very curious piece of comparative criticism, were the opinions and the arguments of all the critics—those of the time and of the present day—thrown into the smelting-pot. The massiness of some opinions of great authority would be reduced to a thread of wire; and even what is accepted as standard ore, might shrink into "a gilt sixpence." On one side, the condemners of D'Avenant would be Rymer, Blackwall, Granger, Knox, Hurd, and Hayley; and the advocates would be Hobbes, Waller, Cowley, Dr. Aikin, Headley, &c. Rymer opened his Aristotelian text-book. He discovers that the poet's first lines do not give any light into his design (it is probable D'Avenant would have found it hard to have told it to Mr. Rymer); that it has neither proposition nor invocation—(Rymer might have filled these up himself); so that "he chooses to enter into the top of the house, because the mortals of mean and satisfied minds go in at the door;" and then "he has no hero or action so illustrious that the *name* of the poem prepared the reader for its reception." D'Avenant had rejected the marvellous from his poem—that is, the machinery of the epic: he had resolved to compose a tale of human beings for men. "This was," says Blackwall, another of the classical flock, "like lopping off a man's limb, and then putting him upon running races." Our formal critics are quite lively in their dulness on our "adventurer." But poets, in the crisis of a poetical revolution, are more legitimate judges than all such critics. Waller and Cowley applaud D'Avenant for this very omission of the epical machinery in this new vein of invention:—

The Gondibert has poetical defects fatal for its popularity; the theme was not happily chosen; the quatrain has been discovered by capricious ears to be unpleasing, though its solemnity was felt by Dryden. The style is sometimes harsh and abrupt, though often exquisite; and the fable is deficient in that rapid interest which the story-loving readers of all times seem most to regard. All these are diseases which would have long since proved mortal in a poem less vital; but our poet was a commanding genius, who redeemed his bold errors by his energetic originality. The luxuriancy of his fancy, the novelty of his imagery, the grandeur of his views of human life; his delight in the new sciences of his age;—these are some of his poetical virtues. But, above all, we dwell on the impressive solemnity of his philosophical reflections, and his condensed epigrammatic thoughts. The work is often more ethical than poetical; yet, while we feel ourselves becoming wiser at every page, in the fulness of our minds we still perceive that our emotions have been seldom stirred by passion. The poem falls from our hands! yet is there none, of which we wish to retain so many single verses. D'Avenant is a poetical Rochefoucault; the sententious force of his maxims on all human affairs could only have been composed by one who had lived in a constant intercourse with mankind *.

" Here no bold tales of gods or monsters swell,
But human passions such as with us dwell;
Man is thy theme, his virtue or his rage,
Drawn to the life in each elaborate page."
WALLER.

" Methinks heroic poesy, till now,
Like some fantastic fairy-land did show,
And all but man, in man's best work had place."
COWLEY.

Hurd's discussion on Gondibert, in his Commentaries, is the most important piece of criticism; subtle, ingenious, and exquisitely analytical. But he holds out the fetter of authority, and he decides as a judge who expounds laws; not the best decision, when new laws are required to abrogate obsolete ones. And what laws invented by man can be immutable? D'Avenant was thus tried by the laws of a country, that of Greece or Rome, of which, it is said, he was not even a denizen.

It is remarkable that all the critics who condemn D'Avenant could not but be struck by his excellences, and are very particular in expressing their admiration of his genius. I mean all the critics who have read the poem: some assuredly have criticised with little trouble.

* I select some of these lines as examples. Of

A delightful invention in this poem is " the House of Astragon," a philosophical residence. Every great poet is affected by the revolutions of his age. The new experimental philosophy had revived the project of Lord Bacon's learned retirement, in his philosophical romance of the Atalantis; and subsequently in a time of civil repose after civil war, Milton, Cowley, and Evelyn attempted to devote an abode to science itself. These tumults of the imagination subsided in the establishment of the Royal Society. D'Avenant anticipated this institution. On an estate consecrated to philosophy, stands a retired building, on which is inscribed, " Great Nature's Office," inhabited by sages, who are styled " Nature's Registers," busily recording whatever is

Care, who only " seals her eyes in cloisters," he says,

" She visits cities, but she dwells in thrones."

Of learned Curiosity, eager, but not to be hurried—the student is

" Hasty to know, though not by haste beguiled."

He calls a library, with sublime energy,

" The monument of vanish'd minds."

Never has a politician conveyed with such force a most important precept:

——————— " The laws,
Men from themselves, but not from power, secure."

Of the Court he says,

" There prosperous power sleeps long, though suitors wake."
" Be bold, for number cancels bashfulness;
Extremes, from which a King would blushing shrink,
Unblushing senates act as no excess."

And these lines, taken as they occur:

" Truth's a discovery made by travelling minds."
" Honour's the moral conscience of the great."
" They grow so certain, as to need no hope."
" Praise is devotion fit for mighty minds."

I conclude with one complete stanza, of the same cast of reflection. It may be inscribed in the library of the student, in the studio of the artist, in every place where excellence can only be obtained by knowledge.

" Rich are the diligent, who can command
Time, nature's stock! and, could his hour-glass fall,
Would, as for seed of stars, stoop for the sand,
And by incessant labour gather all!"

brought to them by "a throng of Intelligencers," who make "patient observations" in the field, the garden, the river, on every plant, and "every fish and fowl and beast." Near at hand is "Nature's Nursery," a botanical garden. We have also "a Cabinet of Death," "the monument of bodies," an anatomical collection, which leads to "the Monument of vanished Minds," as the poet finely describes the library. Is it not striking to find, says Dr. Aikin, so exact a model of *the school of Linnæus*?

This was a poem to delight a philosopher; and Hobbes, in a curious epistle prefixed to the work, has strongly marked its distinct beauties. Gondibert not only came forth with the elaborate panegyric of Hobbes, but was also accompanied by the high commendatory poems of Waller and Cowley; a cause which will sufficiently account for the provocations it inflamed among the poetical crew; and besides these accompaniments, there is a preface of great length, stamped with all the force and originality of the poet's own mind; and a postscript, as sublime from the feelings which dictated it as from the time and place of its composition.

In these, this great genius pours himself out with all that "glory of which his large soul appears to have been full," as Hurd has nobly expressed it*. Such a conscious dignity of character, struck the petulant wits with a provoking sense of their own littleness.

A club of wits caballed, and produced a collection of short poems, sarcastically entitled "*Certain Verses written by several of the Author's Friends, to be reprinted in the Second Edition of Gondibert*, 1653." Two years after appeared a brother volume, entitled "*The Incomparable Poem of Gondibert vindicated from the Wit-Combats of Four Esquires; Clinias, Dametas, Sancho, and Jack-Pudding*†; with these mottos:

"Κοτέει καὶ δοῖδος ἀοιδῳ.
Vatum quoque gratia, rara est."
Anglicè,
"One wit-brother
Envies another."

Of these rare tracts, we are told by Anthony Wood, and all subsequent literary historians, too often mere transcribers of title-pages, that the second was written by our author himself. Would not one imagine that it was a real vindication, or at least a retort-courteous on these obliging friends? The irony of the whole volume has escaped their discovery. The second tract is a continuation of the satire: a mock defence, where the sarcasm, and the pretended remonstrance, are sometimes keener than the open attack. If, indeed, D'Avenant were the author of a continuation of a satire on himself, it is an act of *felo de se* no poet ever committed; a self-flagellation by an iron whip, where blood is drawn at every stroke, the most penitent bard never inflicted on himself. Would D'Avenant have bantered his proud labour,

* Can one read such passages as these, without catching some of the sympathies of a great genius that knows itself?

"He who writes an heroic poem, leaves an estate entailed, and he gives a greater gift to posterity than to the present age; for a public benefit is best measured in the number of receivers; and our contemporaries are but few, when reckoned with those who shall succeed.

"If thou art a malicious reader, thou wilt remember my preface boldly confessed, that a main motive to the undertaking was a desire of fame; and thou mayest likewise say, I may very possibly not live to enjoy it. Truly, I have some years ago considered that Fame, like Time, only gets a reverence by long running; and that, like a river, 'tis narrowest where 'tis bred, and broadest afar off.

"If thou, reader, art one of those who have been warmed with poetic fire, I reverence thee as my judge; and whilst others tax me with vanity, I appeal to thy conscience whether it be more than such a necessary assurance as thou hast made to thyself in like undertakings? For when I observe that writers have many enemies, such inward assurance, methinks, resembles that forward confidence in men of arms, which makes them proceed in great enterprise; since the right examination of abilities begins with inquiring whether we doubt ourselves."

Such a composition is injured by mutilation. He here also alludes to his military character: "Nor could I sit idle, and sigh with such as mourn to hear the drum; for if the age be not quiet enough to be taught virtue a pleasant way, the next may be at leisure; nor could I (like men that have civilly slept till they are old in dark cities) think war a novelty." Shakespeare could not have expressed his feelings, in his own style, more eloquently touching, than D'Avenant.

† It is said there were four writers. The Clinias and Dametas were probably Sir John Denham and Jo. Donne; Sir Allan Broderick and Will Crofts, who is mentioned by the club as one of their fellows, appear to be the Sancho and Jack-Pudding. Will Crofts was a favourite with Charles II.: he had been a skilful agent, as appears in Clarendon. Howell has a poem "On some who, blending their brains together, plotted how to bespatter one of the Muses' choicest sons, Sir William D'Avenant."

by calling it "incomparable?" And were it true, that he felt the strokes of their witty malignity so lightly, would he not have secured his triumph by finishing that Gondibert, "the monument of his mind?" It is too evident, that this committee of wits hurt the quiet of a great mind.

As for this series of literary satires, it might have been expected, that since the wits clubbed, this committee ought to have been more effective in their operations. Many of their papers were, no doubt, more blotted with their wine than their ink. Their variety of attack is playful, sarcastic, and malicious. They were then such exuberant wits, that they could make even ribaldry and grossness witty. My business with these wicked trifles is only as they concerned the feelings of the great poet, whom they too evidently hurt, as well as the great philosopher who condescended to notice these wits, with wit more dignified than their own.

Unfortunately for our "jeered Will," as in their usual court-style they call him, he had met with "a foolish mischance," well known among the collectors of our British portraits. There was a feature in his face, or rather no feature at all, that served as a perpetual provocative: there was no precedent of such a thing, says Suckling, in "The Sessions of the Poets"—

"In all their records, in verse or in prose,
There was none of a Laureat who wanted a nose."

Besides, he was now doomed—

"Nor could old Hobbes
Defend him from dry bobbs."

The preface of Gondibert, the critical epistle of Hobbes, and the poems of the two greatest poets in England, were first to be got rid of. The attack is brisk and airy.

"UPON THE PREFACE.

"Room for the best of poets heroic,
If you'll believe two wits and a Stoic.
Down go the *Iliads*, down go the *Æneidos*:
All must give place to the *Gondiberteidos*.
For to *Homer* and *Virgil* he has a just pique,
Because one's writ in Latin, the other in Greek;
Besides an old grudge (our critics they say so)
With *Ovid*, because his sirname was *Naso*.
If fiction the fame of a poet thus raises,
What poets are you that have writ his praises?
But we justly quarrel at this our defeat;
You give us a stomach, he gives us no meat.
A preface to no book, a porch to no house;
Here is the mountain, but where is the mouse?"

This stroke, in the mock defence, is thus warded off, with a slight confession of the existence of "the mouse."

"Why do you bite, you men of fangs
(That is, of teeth that forward hangs),
And charge my dear Ephestion
With want of meat? you want digestion.
We poets use not so to do,
To find men meat and stomach too.
You have the book, you have the house,
And mum, good Jack, and catch the mouse."

Among the personal foibles of D'Avenant, appears a desire to disguise his humble origin; and to give it an air of lineal descent, he probably did not write his name as his father had done. It is said he affected, at the cost of his mother's honour, to insinuate that he was the son of Shakespeare, who used to bait at his father's inn. These humorists first reduce D'Avenant to "Old Daph."

"Denham, come help me to laugh,
At old Daph,
Whose fancies are higher than chaff."

Daph swells afterwards into "Daphne;" a change of sex, inflicted on the Poet for making one of his heroines a man; and this new alliance to Apollo becomes a source of perpetual allusion to the bays—

"Cheer up, small wits, now *you* shall crowned be,—
Daphne himself is turn'd into a tree."

One of the club inquires about the situation of *Avenant*—

"— where now it lies,
Whether in Lombard*, or the skies."

Because, as seven cities disputed for the birth of Homer, so after ages will not want towns claiming to be *Avenant*—

"Some say by *Avenant* no place is meant,
And that our Lombard is without descent;
And as, by *Bilk*, men mean there's nothing there,
So come from *Avenant*, means from *no where*.
Thus *Will*, intending *D'Avenant* to grace,
Has made a notch in's name like that in's face."

D'Avenant had been knighted for his good conduct at the siege of Gloucester, and was to be tried by the Parliament, but procured his release without trial. This produces the following sarcastic epigram:—

* The scene where the story of Gondibert is placed, which the wits sometimes pronounced *Lumber* and *Lumbery*.

"UPON FIGHTING WILL.

"The King knights Will for fighting on his side;
Yet when Will comes for fighting to be tried,
There is not one in all the armies can
Say they e'er felt, or saw, this fighting man.
Strange, that the Knight should not be known
i' th' field;
A face well charged, though nothing in his shield.
Sure fighting Will like *basilisk* did ride
Among the troops, and all that *saw* Will died;
Else how could Will, for fighting, be a Knight,
And none alive that ever saw Will fight?"

Of the malignancy of their wit, we must preserve one specimen. They probably harassed our poet with anonymous despatches from the Club: for there appears another poem on D'Avenant's anger on such an occasion:—

"A LETTER SENT TO THE GOOD KNIGHT.

"Thou hadst not been thus long neglected,
But we, thy four best friends, expected,
Ere this time, thou hadst stood corrected.
But since that planet governs still,
That rules thy tedious fustian quill
'Gainst nature and the Muses' will;
When, by thy friends' advice and care,
'Twas hoped, in time, thou wouldst despair
To give ten pounds to write it fair;
Lest thou to all the world would show it,
We thought it fit to let thee know it:
Thou art a damn'd insipid poet!"

These literary satires contain a number of other "pasquils," burlesqueing the characters, the incidents, and the stanza, of the GONDIBERT: some not the least witty are the most gross, and must not be quoted; thus the wits of that day were poetical suicides, who have shortened their lives by their folly.

D'Avenant, like more than one epic poet, did not tune to his ear the *names* of his personages. They have added, to show that his writings are adapted to an easy musical singer, "the names of his heroes and heroines, in these verses:—

"Hurgonil, Astolpho, Borgia, Goltha, Tibalt,
Astragon, Hermogild, Ulfinor, Orgo, Thula."

And "epithets that will serve for any substantives, either in this part or the next."

Such are the labours of the idlers of genius, envious of the nobler industry of genius itself!—How the great author's spirit was nourished by the restoratives of his other friends, after the bitter decoctions prescribed by these "Four," I fear we may judge by the unfinished state in which Gondibert has come down to us. D'Avenant seems, however, to have guarded his dignity by his silence; but Hobbes took an opportunity of delivering an exquisite opinion on this Club of Wits, with perfect philosophical indifference. It is in a letter to the Hon. EDWARD HOWARD, who requested to have his sentiments on another heroic poem of his own, "The British Princes."

"My judgment in poetry hath, you know, been once already censured, by very good wits, for commending Gondibert; but yet they have not, I think, disabled my testimony. For, *what authority is there in wit?* A jester may have it; a man in drink may have it, and be fluent over night, and wise and dry in the morning. What is it? or who can tell whether it be better to have it, or be without it, especially if it be a pointed wit? I will take my liberty to praise what I like, as well as they do to reprehend what they do not like."

The stately Gondibert was not likely to recover favour in the court of Charles the Second, where man was never regarded in his true greatness, but to be ridiculed; a court where the awful presence of Clarendon became so irksome, that the worthless monarch exiled him; a court where nothing was listened to but wit at the cost of sense, the injury of truth, and the violation of decency; where a poem of magnitude with new claims, was a very business for those volatile arbiters of taste; an Epic Poem that had been travestied and epigrammed, was a national concern with them, which, next to some new state-plot, that occurred oftener than a new Epic, might engage the monarch and his privy council. These were not the men to be touched by the compressed reflections and the ideal virtues personified in this poem. In the court of the laughing voluptuary the manners as well as the morals of these satellites of pleasure were so little heroic, that those of the highest rank, both in birth and wit, never mentioned each other but with the vulgar familiarity of nicknames, or the coarse appellatives of Dick, Will, and Jack! Such was the era when the serious Gondibert was produced, and such were the judges who seem to have decided its fate.

THE

PAPER-WARS OF THE CIVIL WARS.

The "Mercuries" and "Diurnals," archives of political fictions—"The Diurnals," in the pay of the Parliament, described by BUTLER and CLEIVELAND—Sir JOHN BIRKENHEAD excels in sarcasm, with specimens of his "Mercurius Aulicus"—how he corrects his own lies—Specimens of the Newspapers on the side of the Commonwealth.

AMONG these battles of Logomachy, in which so much ink has been spilt, and so many pens have lost their edge—at a very solemn period in our history, when all around was distress and sorrow, stood forwards the facetious ancestors of that numerous progeny who still flourish among us, and who, without a suspicion of their descent, still bear the features of their progenitors, and inherit so many of the family humours. These were the MERCURIES and DIURNALS—the newspapers of our Civil Wars.

The distinguished heroes of these Paper-Wars, Sir John Birkenhead, Marchmont Needham, and Sir Roger L'Estrange, I have elsewhere portrayed*. We have had of late correct lists of these works; but no one seems as yet to have given any clear notion of their spirit and their manner.

The London Journals in the service of the Parliament were usually the *Diurnals*. These politicians practised an artifice which cannot be placed among "the lost inventions." As these were hawked about the metropolis to spur curiosity, often languid from over-exercise, or to wheedle an idle spectator into a reader, every paper bore on its front the inviting heads of its intelligence. Men placed in the same circumstances will act in the same manner, without any notion of imitation; and the passions of mankind are now addressed by the same means which our ancestors employed, by those who do not suspect they are copying them.

These *Diurnals* have been blasted by the lightnings of Butler and Cleiveland. Hudibras is made happy at the idea that he may be

> "Register'd by fame eternal,
> In deathless pages of DIURNAL."

But Cleiveland has left us two remarkable effusions of his satiric and vindictive powers, in his curious character of "A Diurnal Maker," and "A London Diurnal." He writes in the peculiar vein of the wit of those times, with an originality of images, whose combinations excite surprise, and whose abundance fatigues our weaker delicacy.

"A Diurnal-Maker is the Sub-Almoner of History; Queen Mab's Register; one whom, by the same figure that a North-country pedlar is a merchantman, you may style an author. The silly countryman who, seeing an ape in a scarlet coat, blessed his young worship, and gave his landlord joy of the hopes of his house, did not slander his compliment with worse application than he that names this shred an historian. To call him an Historian is to knight a Mandrake; 'tis to view him through a perspective, and, by that gross hyperbole, to give the reputation of an engineer to a maker of mousetraps. When these weekly fragments shall pass for history, let the poor man's box be entitled the Exchequer, and the alms-basket a Magazine. Methinks the Turks should license Diurnals, because he prohibits learning and books." He characterises the Diurnals as "a puny chronicle, scarce pin-feathered with the wings of Time; it is a history in sippets; the English Iliads in a nutshell; the Apocryphal Parliament's book of Maccabees in single sheets."

But Cleiveland tells us, that these *Diurnals* differ from a *Mercurius Aulicus* (the paper of his party),

—"as the Devil and his Exorcist, or as a black witch doth from a white one, whose office is to unravel her enchantments."

The *Mercurius Aulicus* was chiefly conducted by SIR JOHN BIRKENHEAD, at Oxford, "communicating the intelligence and affairs of the court to

* Curiosities of Literature, 11th Edition, p. 56.

the rest of the kingdom." Sir John was a great wag, and excelled in sarcasm and invective; his facility is equal to repartee, and his spirit often reaches to wit: a great forger of tales, who probably considered that a romance was a better thing than a newspaper*. The royal party were so delighted with his witty buffoonery, that Sir John was recommended to be Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford. Did political lying seem to be a kind of moral philosophy to the feelings of a party? The originality of Birkenhead's happy manner consists in his adroit use of sarcasm: he strikes it off by means of a parenthesis. I shall give, as a specimen, one of his summaries of what the *Parliamentary Journals* had been detailing during the week.

"The Londoners in print this week have been pretty copious. They say that *a troop of the Marquess of Newcastle's horse have submitted to the Lord Fairfax*. (They were part of the *German* horse which came over in the *Danish* fleet †.) That the Lord *Wilmot hath been dead five weeks, but the Cavaliers concealed his death.* (Remember this!) That *Sir John Urrey* ‡ *is dead and buried at Oxford.* (He died the same day with the Lord Wilmot.) That the *Cavaliers, before they have done, will* HURREY *all men into misery.* (This quibble hath been six times printed, and nobody would take notice of it; now let's hear of it no more!) That *all the Cavaliers which Sir William Waller took prisoners* (*besides* 500) *tooke the National Covenant.* (Yes, all he took (besides 500) tooke the Covenant.) That 2000 *Irish Rebels landed in Wales.* (You called them English Protestants till you cheated them of their money.) That *Sir William Brereton left* 140 *good able men in Hawarden Castle.* ('Tis the better for Sir Michael Earnley, who hath taken the Castle.) That *the Queen hath a great deafnesse.* (Thou hast a great blister on thy tongue.) That *the Cavaliers burned all the suburbs of Chester, that Sir William Brereton might find no shelter to besiedge it.* (There was no hayrick, and Sir William cares for no other shelter §.) The SCOTTISH DOVE says (there are

* There is a small poem, published in 1643, entitled, "The Great Assizes holden in Parnassus," in the manner of a later work, "The Sessions of the Poets," in which all the Diurnals and Mercuries are arraigned and tried. An impartial satire on them all; and by its good sense and heavy versification, is so much in the manner of GEORGE WITHER, that some have conjectured it to be that singular author's. Its rarity gives it a kind of value. Of such verses as Wither's, who has been of late extolled too highly, the chief merit is their sense and truth: which, if he were not tedious, might be an excellence in prose. Antiquaries, when they find a poet adapted for their purposes, conjecture that he is an excellent one. This prosing satirist, strange to say, in some pastoral poetry, has opened the right vein.

Aulicus is well characterised:

——— "hee, for wicked ends,
Had the Castalian spring defiled with gall,
And changed by Witchcraft most satyricall,
The bayes of Helicon and myrtles mild,
To pricking hawthornes and to hollies wild.
——— with slanders false,
With forged fictitious calumnies and tales—
He added fewel to the direful flame
Of civil discord; and domestic blowes,
By the incentives of malicious prose.
For whereas he should have composed his inke
Of liquors that make flames expire, and shrink
Into their cinders—
— He laboured hard for to bring in
The exploded doctrines of the Florentine,
And taught that to dissemble and to lie
Were vital parts of human policie."

† Alluding to a ridiculous rumour, that the King was to receive foreign troops by a Danish fleet.

‡ Col. Urrey, alias Hurrey, deserted the Parliament, and went over to the King; afterwards deserted the King, and discovered to the Parliament all he knew of the King's forces.—*See Clarendon.*

§ This Sir William Brereton, or, as Clarendon writes the name, Bruerton, was the famous Cheshire knight, whom Cleiveland characterises as one of those heroes whose courage lies in their teeth. "Was Brereton," says the loyal Satirist, "to fight with his teeth, as he in all other things resembles the beast, he would have odds of any man at this weapon. He's a terrible slaughterman at a Thanksgiving dinner. Had he been cannibal enough to have eaten those he vanquished, his gut would have made him valiant." And in "Loyal Songs" his valiant appetite is noticed:

"But, oh! take heed lest he do eat
The Rump all at one dinner!"

And Aulicus, we see, accuses him of concealing his bravery in a hay-rick. It is always curious and useful to confer the writers of intemperate times one with another. Lord Clarendon, whose great mind was incapable of descending to scurrility, gives a very different character to this pot-valiant and hay-rick runaway; for he says, "It cannot be denied but Sir William Brereton, and the other gentlemen of that party, albeit their educations and course of life had been very dif-

Doves in Scotland!) that *Hawarden Castle had but forty men in it when the Cavaliers took it.* (Another told you here were 140 lusty stout fellows in it: for shame, gentlemen! conferre Notes!) That *Colonel Norton at Rumsey took* 200 *prisoners.* (I saw them counted: they were just two millions.) Then the *Dove* hath this sweet passage: *O Aulicus, thou profane wretch, that darest scandalize* God's *saints, darest thou call that loyal subject Master Pym a traitor?* (Yes, pretty *Pigeon* *, he was charged with six articles by his Majesty's Atturney Generall.) Next he says, that *Master Pym died like Moses upon the mount.* (He did not die upon the mount, but should have done.) Then he says, *Master Pym died in a good old age, like Jacob in Egypt.* (Not like Jacob, yet just as those died in Egypt in the days of Pharaoh †.")

As Sir John was frequently the propagator of false intelligence, it was necessary at times to seem scrupulous, and to correct some slight errors. He does this very adroitly, without diminishing his invectives.

"We must correct a mistake or two in our two last weeks. We advertised you of certain money speeches made by Master *John* Sedgwick: on better information, it was not *John*, but *Obadiah*, Presbyter of Bread-street, who in the pulpit in hot weather used to unbutton his doublet, which John, who wanteth a thumbe, forbears to practise. And when we told you last week, of a committee of *Lawyers* appointed to put their new *Seale* in execution, we named, among others, Master George Peard ‡. I confess this was no small errour, to reckon Master Peard among the *Lawyers*, because he now lies sicke, and so farre from being their new *Lord Keeper*, that he now despairs to become their *Door-keeper*, which office he performed heretofore. But since Master Peard has become desperately sick; and so his vote, his law, and haire have all forsook him, his corporation of Barnstable have been in perfect health and loyalty. The town of Barnstable having submitted to the King, this will no doubt be a special cordial for their languishing Burgess. And yet the man may grow hearty again when he hears of the late defeat given to his Majesty's forces in Lincolnshire."

This paper was immediately answered by MARCHMONT NEEDHAM, in his "Mercurius Britannicus," who cannot boast the playful and sarcastic bitterness of Sir John; yet is not the dullest of his tribe. He opens his reply thus:

"Aulicus will needs venture his soule upon the other *half-sheet;* and this week he *lies*, as completely as ever he did in *two full sheets;* full of as many scandals and fictions, full of as much stupidity and ignorance, full of as many tedious untruths as ever. And because he would *recruit* the reputation of his wit, he falls into the company of our *Diurnals* very furiously, and there lays about him in the midst of our weekly pamphlets; and he casts in the few squibs, and the little wildfire he hath, dashing out his conceits; and he takes it ill that the poore scribblers should tell a story for their living; and after a whole week spent at Oxford, in inke and paper, to as little purpose as *Maurice* spent his shot and powder at *Plimouth*, he gets up, about Saturday, into a jingle or two, for he cannot reach to a full jest; and I am informed that the three-quarter

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ferent from their present engagements, and for the most part very unpromising in matters of war, and therefore were too much contemned enemies, executed their commands with notable sobriety and indefatigable industry (virtues not so well practised in the King's quarters), insomuch as the best soldiers who encountered with them had no cause to despise them."—*Clarendon*, vol. ii. p. 147.

* "The Scotch Dove" seems never to have recovered from this metamorphosis, but ever after, among the newsmongers, was known to be only a Widgeon. His character is not very high in "The Great Assizes."

"The innocent *Scotch Dove* did then advance,
Full sober in his wit and countenance;
And, though his book contain'd not mickle scence,
Yet his endictment shew'd no great offence.
Great wits to perils great, themselves expose
Oft-times; but the *Scotch Dove* was none of those.
In many words he little matter drest,
And did laconick brevity detest.
But while his readers did expect some Newes,
They found a Sermon—"

The Scotch Dove desires to meet the classical Aulicus in the duel of the pen:

——————"to turn me loose,
A *Scottish Dove* against a *Roman Goose.*"

"The Scotch Dove" is condemned "to cross the seas, or to repasse the Tweede." They all envy him his "easy mulct," but he wofully exclaims at the hard sentence,

"For if they knew that *home* as well as he,
They'd rather die than there imprison'd be!"

† This stroke alludes to a rumour of the times, noticed also by Clarendon, that Pym died of the *morbus pediculosus.*

‡ "Peard, a bold lawyer of little note."—*Clarendon.*

conceits in the last leafe of his Diurnall cost him fourteen pence in *aqua vitæ*."

Sir John never condescends formally to reply to Needham, for which he gives this singular reason: —"As for this libeller, we are still resolved to take no notice till we find him able to spell his own name, which to this hour BRITANNICUS never did."

In the next number of Needham, who had always written it *Brittanicus*, the correction was silently adopted. There was no crying down the etymology of an Oxford malignant.

I give a short narrative of the political temper of the times, in their unparalleled gazettes.

At the first breaking out of the parliament's separation from the royal party, when the public mind, full of consternation in that new anarchy, shook with the infirmity of childish terrors, the most extravagant reports were as eagerly caught up as the most probable, and served much better the purposes of their inventors. They had daily discoveries of new conspiracies, which appeared in a pretended correspondence written from Spain, France, Italy, or Denmark: they had their amusing literature, mixed with their grave politics; and a dialogue between "a Dutch mariner and an English ostler," could alarm the nation as much as the last letter from their "private correspondent." That the wildest rumours were acceptable appears from their contemporary Fuller. Armies were talked of, concealed under ground by the king, to cut the throats of all the Protestants in a night. He assures us, that one of the most prevailing dangers among the Londoners was, "a design laid for a mine of powder under the Thames, to cause the river to drown the city." This desperate expedient, it seems, was discovered just in time to prevent its execution; and the people were devout enough to have a public thanksgiving, and watched with a little more care, that the Thames might not be blown up. However, the plot was really not so much at the bottom of the Thames as at the bottom of their purses. Whenever they wanted 100,000*l.* they raised a plot, they terrified the people, they appointed a thanksgiving-day, and while their ministers addressed to God himself all the news of the week, and even reproached him for the rumours against their cause, all ended, as is usual at such times, with the gulled multitude contributing more heavily to the adventurers who ruled them than the legal authorities had exacted in their greatest wants. "The Diurnals" had propagated thirty-nine of these "Treasons, or new Taxes," according to one of the members of the House of Commons, who had watched their patriotic designs.

These "Diurnals" sometimes used such language as the following, from "The Weekly Accompt," January, 1643:—

"This day afforded no newes at all, but onely what was *heavenly* and *spiritual*;" and he gives an account of the public fast, and of the grave Divine Master Henderson's Sermon, with his texts in the morning; and in the afternoon, another of Master Strickland, with his texts—and of their spiritual effect over the whole parliament!

Such news as the following was sometimes very agreeable:—

"From Oxford it is informed, that on Sunday last was fortnight in the evening, Prince Rupert, accompanied with some lords, and other cavaliers, *danced through the streets openly, with music before them*, to one of the colleges; where, after they had stayed about half an houre, they returned back again, dancing with the same music; and immediately there followed *a pack of women, or curtizans*, as it may be supposed, for they were hooded, and could not be knowne; and this the party who related affirmed he saw with his own eyes."

On this the Diurnal-maker pours out severe anathemas—and one with a *note*, that "*dancing* and *drabbing* are inseparable companions, and follow one another close at the heels." He assures his readers, that the malignants, or royalists, only fight like sensual beasts, to maintain their dancing and drabbing!—Such was the revolutionary tone here, and such the arts of faction everywhere. The matter was rather peculiar to our country, but the principle was the same as practised in France. Men of opposite characters, when acting for the same concealed end, must necessarily form parallels.

POLITICAL CRITICISM

ON

LITERARY COMPOSITIONS.

ANTHONY WOOD and LOCKE—MILTON and SPRAT—BURNET and his History—PRIOR and ADDISON—SWIFT and STEELE—WAGSTAFFE and STEELE—STEELE and ADDISON—HOOKE and MIDDLETON—GILBERT WAKEFIELD—MARVELL and MILTON—CLARENDON and MAY.

VOLTAIRE, in his letters on our nation, has hit off a marked feature in our national physiognomy. "So violent did I find parties in London, that I was assured by several that the Duke of MARLBOROUGH was a coward, and Mr. POPE a fool."

A foreigner indeed could hardly expect that in collecting the characters of English authors by English authors (a labour which has long afforded me pleasure often interrupted by indignation)—in a word, that a class of literary history should turn out a collection of personal quarrels. Would not this modern Baillet, in his new *Jugemens des Sçavans*, so ingeniously inquisitive but so infinitely confused, require to be initiated into the mysteries of that spirit of party peculiar to our free country!

All that boiling rancour which sputters against the thoughts, the style, the taste, the moral character of an author, is often nothing more than practising what, to give it a name, we may call *Political Criticism in Literature;* where an author's literary character is attacked solely from the accidental circumstance of his differing in opinion from his critics, on subjects unconnected with the topics he treats of.

Could Anthony Wood, had he not been influenced by this political criticism, have sent down LOCKE to us, as "a man of a turbulent spirit, clamorous, and never contented, prating, and troublesome*?" But Locke was the antagonist of FILMER, that advocate of arbitrary power; and Locke is described "as bred under a fanatical tutor," and when in Holland, as one of those who under the earl of Shaftesbury "stuck close to him when discarded, and carried on the *trade of faction* beyond and within the seas several years after." In the great original genius, born, like BACON and NEWTON, to create a new era in the history of the human mind, this political literary critic, who was not always deficient in his perceptions of genius, could only discover "a trader in faction," though in his honesty, he acknowledges him to be "a noted writer."

A more illustrious instance of party-spirit operating against works of genius, is presented to us in the awful character of MILTON. From earliest youth to latest age, endowed with all the characteristics of genius; fervent with all the inspirations of study; in all changes, still the same great literary character as Velleius Paterculus writes of one of his heroes, "Aliquando fortunâ, semper animo maximus:" while in his own day, foreigners, who usually anticipate posterity, were inquiring after Milton, it is known how utterly

* A forcible description of Locke may be found in the curious life of Wood, written by himself. I shall give the passage where Wood acknowledges his after celebrity, at the very moment the bigotry of his feelings is attempting to degrade him. Wood belonged to a club with Locke, and others, for the purpose of hearing chemical lectures. "John Locke of Christ Church was afterwards a noted writer. This John Locke was a man of a turbulent spirit, clamorous, and never contented. The Club wrote and took notes from the mouth of their master, who sate at the upper end of a table, but the said John Locke scorned to do it; so that while every man besides of the Club were writing, he would be prating and troublesome."

disregarded he lived at home. The divine author of the Paradise Lost was always connected with the man for whom a reward was offered in the London Gazette. But in their triumph, the lovers of monarchy missed their greater glory, in not separating for ever the republican secretary of state, from the rival of Homer.

That the genius of Milton pined away in solitude, and that all the consolations of fame were denied him during his life, from this political criticism on his works, is generally known; but not perhaps that this spirit propagated itself far beyond the poet's tomb. I give a remarkable instance. Bishop Sprat, who surely was capable of feeling the poetry of Milton, yet from political antipathy retained such an abhorrence of his *name*, that when the writer of the Latin Inscription on the poet JOHN PHILIPS, in describing his versification, applied to it the term *Miltono*, Sprat ordered it to be erased, as polluting a monument raised in a church*. A mere critical opinion on versification was thus sacrificed to political feeling:—a stream indeed which in its course has hardly yet worked itself clear. It could only have been the strong political feeling of Warton which could have induced him to censure the prose of Milton with such asperity, while he closed his critical eyes on its resplendent passages, which certainly he wanted not the taste to feel,—for he caught in his own pages, occasionally, some of the reflected warmth. This feeling took full possession of the mind of Johnson, who, with all the rage of political criticism on subjects of literature, has condemned the finest works of Milton, and in one of his terrible paroxysms has demonstrated that the Samson Agonistes is "a Tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded." Had not Johnson's religious feelings fortunately interposed between Milton and his "Paradise," we should have wanted the present noble effusion of his criticism; any other Epic by Milton had probably sunk beneath his vigorous sophistry, and his tasteless sarcasm. Lauder's attack on Milton was hardily projected, on a prospect of encouragement, from this political criticism on the literary character of Milton; and he succeeded as long as he could preserve the decency of the delusion.

The Spirit of Party has touched with its plague-spot the character of Burnet; it has mildewed the page of a powerful mind, and tainted by its suspicions, its rumours, and its censures, his probity as a man. Can we forbear listening to all the vociferations which faction has thrown out? Do we not fear to trust ourselves amid the multiplicity of his facts? And when we are familiarised with the variety of his historical portraits, are we not startled when it is suggested that "they are tinged with his own passions and his own weaknesses?" Burnet has indeed made "his humble appeal to the great God of Truth" that he has given it as fully as he could find it; and he has expressed his abhorrence of "a lie in history," so much greater a sin than a lie in common discourse, from its lasting and universal nature. Yet these hallowing protestations have not saved him! A cloud of witnesses, from different motives, have risen up to attaint his veracity and his candour; while all the Tory wits have ridiculed his style, impatiently inaccurate, and uncouthly negligent, and would

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* This anecdote deserves preservation; I have drawn it from the MSS. of Bishop KENNET.

"In the Epitaph on JOHN PHILIPS occurs this line on his metre, that

'Uni in hoc laudis genere Miltono secundus,
Primoque pene par.'

These lines were ordered to be razed out of the monument by Dr. Sprat, Bishop of Rochester. The word Miltono being, as he said, not fit to be in a Christian church; but they have since been restored by Dr. ATTERBURY, who succeeded him as Bishop of Rochester, and who wrote the Epitaph jointly with Dr. FREIND."—Lansdowne MSS. No. 908, p. 162.

The anecdote has appeared, but without any authority. Dr. SYMMONS, in his Life of Milton, observing on what he calls Dr. Johnson's "biographical libel on Milton," that Dr. Johnson has mentioned this fact, seems to suspect its authenticity; for, if true, "it would cover the respectable name of Sprat with eternal dishonour." Of its truth the above gives sufficient authority; but at all events the prejudices of Sprat must be pardoned, while I am showing that minds far greater than his have shared in the same unhappy feeling. Dr. Symmons himself bears no light stain for his slanderous criticism on the genius of THOMAS WARTON, from the motive we are discussing; though Warton, as my text shows, was too a sinner! I recollect in my youth a more extraordinary instance than any other which relates to Milton. A woman of no education, who had retired from the business of life, became a very extraordinary reader; accident had thrown in her way a large library composed of authors who wrote in the reigns of the two Charleses. She turned out one of the *malignant* party, and an abhorrer of the Commonwealth's men. Her opinion of CROMWELL and MILTON may be given. She told me it was no wonder that the rebel who had been secretary to the usurper, should have been able to have drawn so finished a character of SATAN, and that the Pandæmonium, with all the oratorical devils, was only such as he had himself viewed at Oliver's council-board.

sink his vigour and ardour, while they expose the meanness and poverty of his genius. Thus the literary and the moral character of no ordinary author have fallen a victim to party-feeling*.

But this victim to political criticism on literature was himself criminal, and has wreaked his own party feelings on the *Papist* Dryden, and the

* I throw into this note several curious notices respecting BURNET, and chiefly from contemporaries.

Burnet has been accused, after a warm discussion, of returning home in a passion, and then writing the character of a person. But as his feelings were warm, it is probable he might have often practised the reverse. An anecdote of the times is preserved in "The Memoirs of Grub-street," vol. ii. p. 291. "A noble Peer now living declares he stood with a very ill grace in the history, till he had an opportunity put into his hands of obliging the bishop, by granting a favour at court, upon which the bishop told a friend, within an hour, that he was mistaken in such a Lord, and must go and alter his whole character; and so he happens to have a pretty good one." In this place I also find this curious extract from the MS. "Memoirs of the M—— of H——." "Such a day Dr. B——t told me King William was an obstinate, conceited man, that would take no advice; and on this day King William told me that Dr. B——t was a troublesome, impertinent man, whose company he could not endure." These anecdotes are very probable, and lead one to reflect. Some political tergiversation has been laid to his charge; Swift accused him of having once been an advocate for passive obedience and absolute power. He has been reproached with the deepest ingratitude, for the purpose of gratifying his darling passion of popularity, in his conduct respecting the Duke of Lauderdale, his former patron.—If the following piece of secret history be true, he showed too much of a compliant humour, at the cost of his honour. I find it in Bishop Kennet's MSS. "Dr. Burnet having *over night* given in some important depositions against the Earl of Lauderdale to the House of Commons, was *before morning*, by the intercession of the D——, made king's chaplain and preacher at the Rolls; so he was bribed to hold the peace." Lansdowne MSS. 990, Bookseller's Cat. This was quite a politician's short way to preferment! An honest man cannot leap up the ascent, however he may try to climb. There was something morally wrong in this transaction, because Burnet notices it, and acknowledges "I was much blamed for what I had done." The story is by no means refuted by the *naïve* apology.

Burnet's character has been vigorously attacked with all the nerve of satire, in "Faction Displayed," attributed to Shippen, whom Pope celebrates—

—— "And pour myself as plain
As honest Shippen or as old Montaigne."

Shippen was a Tory. In "Faction Displayed" Burnet is represented with his Cabal (so some party nicknames the other), on the accession of Queen Anne, plotting the disturbance of her government. "Black Aris's fierceness," that is Burnet, is thus described:

"A Scotch, seditious, unbelieving priest,
The brawny chaplain of the calves'-head feast,
Who first his patron, then his prince betray'd,
And does that church he's sworn to guard, invade,
Warm with rebellious rage, he thus began," &c.

One hardly suspects the hermit Parnell capable of writing rather harsh verses, yet stinging satire; they are not in his works; but he wrote the following lines on a report of a fire breaking out in Burnet's library, which had like to have answered the purpose some wished, of condemning the author and his works to the flames—

"He talks, and writes, that Popery will return,
And we, and he, and all his works, will burn;
And as of late he meant to bless the age
With *flagrant prefaces of party rage*,
O'ercome with passion and the subject's weight,
Lolling he nodded in his elbow-seat;
Down fell the candle!—Grease and zeal conspire,
Heat meets with heat, and pamphlets burn their sire;
Here crawls a *preface* on its half-burn'd maggots,
And there an *introduction* brings its fagots;
Then roars the prophet of the northern nation,
Scorch'd by a flaming speech on moderation."

Thomas Warton smiles at Burnet for the horrors of Popery which perpetually haunted him, in his life of Sir T. Pope, p. 53. But if we substitute the term arbitrary power for popery, no Briton will join in the abuse Burnet has received on this account. A man of Burnet's fervid temper, whose foible was strong vanity and a passion for popularity, would often rush headlong into improprieties of conduct and language; his enemies have taken ample advantage of his errors; but many virtues his friends have recorded; and the elaborate and spirited character which the Marquis of Halifax has drawn of Burnet may soothe his manes, and secure its repose amid all these disturbances around his tomb. This fine character is preserved in the Biographia Britannica. Burnet is not the only instance of the motives of

Tory Prior; Dryden he calls, in the most unguarded language, "a monster of immodesty and impurity of all sorts." There had been a literary quarrel between Dryden and Burnet respecting a translation of Varillas' History of Heresies; Burnet had ruined the credit of the papistical author, while Dryden was busied on the translation; and as Burnet says, "he has wreaked his malice on me for spoiling his three months' labour." In return, he kindly informs Dryden, alluding to his poem of The Hind and the Panther, "that he is the author of the *worst* poem the age has produced;" and that as for "his morals, it is scarce possible to grow a worse man than he was" —a personal style not to be permitted in any controversy, but to bring this passion on the hallowed ground of history, was not "casting away his shoe" in the presence of the divinity of truth. It could only have been the spirit of party which induced Burnet, in his History, to mention with contempt and pretended ignorance, so fine a genius as "*one Prior*, who had been Jersey's secretary." It was the same party-feeling in the Tory Prior, in his elegant "Alma," where he has interwoven so graceful a wreath for Pope, that could sneer at the fine soliloquy of the Roman Cato of the Whig Addison:

> "I hope you would not have me die
> *Like simple Cato in the play*,
> For anything that he can say."

It was the same spirit which would not allow that Garth was the author of his celebrated poem—

> "Garth did not write his own Dispensary."

as Pope ironically alludes to the story of the times:—a contemporary wit has recorded this literary injury, by repeating it*. And Swift, who once exclaimed to Pope, "The deuce take party!" was himself the greatest sinner of them all. He, once the familiar friend of Steele, till party divided them, not only emptied his shaft of quivers against his literary character, but raised the horrid yell of the war-whoop in his inhuman exultation over the unhappy close of the desultory life of a man of genius. Bitterly has he written—

> "From perils of a hundred jails,
> Withdrew to starve, and die in Wales."

When Steele published "The Crisis," Swift attacked the author in so exquisite a piece of grave irony, that I am tempted to transcribe his inimitable parallels of a triumvirate composed of the writer of the Flying Post, Dunton the literary projector, and poor Steele: the one, the Iscariot of hackney scribes; the other a crack-brained scribbling bookseller, who boasted he had a thousand projects, fancied he had methodised six hundred, and was ruined by the fifty he executed. The following is a specimen of that powerful irony in which Swift excelled all other writers; that fine Cervantic humour, that provoking coolness which Swift preserves while he is panegyrising the objects of his utter contempt.

"Among the present writers on the Whig side, I can recollect but *three* of any great distinction; which are, the Flying-Post, Mr. Dunton, and the Author of The Crisis. The first of these seems to have been much sunk in reputation since the sudden retreat of the only true, genuine, original author, Mr. Ridpath, who is celebrated by the *Dutch Gazetteer* as one of *the best pens in England*. Mr. Dunton hath been longer and more conversant in books than any of the three, as well as more voluminous in his productions: however, having employed his studies in so great a variety of other subjects, he hath, I think, but lately turned his genius to politics. His famous

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a man being honourable, while his actions are frequently the reverse, from his impetuous nature. He has been reproached for a want of that truth which he solemnly protests he scrupulously adhered to; yet of many circumstances which were at the time condemned as "lies," when Time drew aside the mighty veil, Truth was discovered beneath. Tovey, with his usual good humour, in his "Anglia Judaica," p. 277, notices "that pleasant copious imagination which will for ever rank our *English Burnet* with the *Grecian Heliodorus*." Roger North, in his "Examen," p. 413, calls him "a busy Scotch parson." Lord Orford sneers at his hasty epithets, and the colloquial carelessness of his style, in his "Historic Doubts," where, in a note, he mentions "*one* Burnet," tells a ridiculous story, mimicking Burnet's chit-chat, and concludes surprisingly with "So the Prince of Orange mounted the throne."

After reading this note, how would that learned foreigner proceed, who I have supposed might be projecting the "Judgments of the Learned" on our English authors? Were he to condemn Burnet as an historian void of all honour and authority, he would not want for documents. It would require a few minutes to explain to the foreigner the nature of political criticism.

* Dr. Wagstaffe, in his "Character of Steele," alludes to the rumour which Pope has sent down to posterity in a single verse: "I should have thought Mr. Steele might have the example of his *friend* before his eyes, who *had the reputation of being the author of The Dispensary*, till, by two or three unlucky after-claps, he proved himself incapable of writing it."—WAGSTAFFE'S *Misc. Works*, p. 136.

tract entitled *Neck or Nothing* must be allowed to be the shrewdest piece, and written with the most spirit of any which hath appeared from that side since the change of the ministry. It is indeed a most cutting satire upon the Lord Treasurer and Lord Bolingbroke; and I wonder none of our friends ever undertook to answer it. I confess I was at first of the same opinion with several good judges, who from the style and manner suppose it to have issued from the sharp pen of the Earl of Nottingham; and I am still apt to think it might receive his lordship's last hand. The third and principal of this triumvirate is the author of *The Crisis*, who, although he must yield to the *Flying-Post* in knowledge of the world and skill in politics, and to Mr. Dunton in keenness of satire and variety of reading, hath yet other qualities enough to denominate him a writer of a superior class to either, provided he would a little regard the propriety and disposition of his words, consult the grammatical part, and get some information on the subject he intends to handle*."

So far this fine ironical satire may be inspected as a model; the polished weapon he strikes with so gracefully, is allowed by all the laws of war; but the political criticism on the literary character, the party feeling which degrades a man of genius, is the drop of poison on its point.

Steele had declared in the "Crisis" that he had always maintained an inviolable respect for the clergy. Swift (who perhaps was aimed at in this instance, and whose character, since the publication of "The Tale of a Tub," lay under a suspicion of an opposite tendency) turns on Steele with all the vigour of his wit, and all the causticity of retort:—

"By this he would insinuate that those papers among the Tatlers and Spectators, where the whole order is abused, were not his own. I will appeal to all who know the flatness of his style, and the barrenness of his invention, whether he doth not grossly prevaricate? *Was he ever able to walk without his leading-strings, or swim without bladders, without being discovered by his hobbling or his sinking?*"

Such was the attack of Swift, which was pursued in the Examiner, and afterwards taken up by another writer. This is one of the evils resulting from the wantonness of genius: it gives a contagious example to the minor race; its touch opens a new vein of invention, which the poorer wits soon break into; the loose sketch of a feature or two from its rapid hand is sufficient to become a minute portrait, where not a hair is spared by the caricaturist. This happened to Steele, whose literary was to be sacrificed to his political character; and this superstructure was confessedly raised on the malicious hints we have been noticing. That the Examiner was the seed-plot of "The Character of Richard St—le, Esq.," appears by its opening—"It will be no injury, I am persuaded, to the Examiner to *borrow him* a little (Steele), upon promise of returning him safe, as children do their playthings, when their mirth is over, and they have done with them."

The author of "The Character of Richard St—le, Esq.," was Dr. Wagstaffe, one of those careless wits † who live to repent a crazy life

* I know not how to ascertain the degree of political skill which Steele reached in his new career—he was at least a spirited Whig, but the ministry was then under the malignant influence of the concealed adherents to the Stuarts, particularly of Bolingbroke, and such as Atterbury, whose secret history is now much better known than in their own day. The terrors of the Whigs were not unfounded.—Steele in the House disappointed his friends; from his popular Essays, it was expected he would have been a fluent orator; this was no more the case with him than Addison. On this De Foe said he had better have continued the *Spectator* than the *Tatler*.—LANSDOWN'S *MSS.* 1097. Bookseller's Cat.

† Wagstaffe's "Miscellaneous Works, *1726*," have been collected into a volume. They contain satirical pieces of humour, accompanied by some Hogarthian prints. His "Comment upon the History of Tom Thumb," ridicules Addison's on the old ballad of Chevy Chase, who had declared "it was full of the majestic simplicity which we admire in the greatest of the ancient poets," and quoted passages which he paralleled with several in the Æneid. Wagstaffe tells us he has found "in the library of a schoolboy, among other undiscovered valuable authors, one more proper to adorn the shelves of Bodley, or the Vatican, than to be confined to the obscurity of a private study." This little Homer is the chanter of Tom Thumb. He performs his office of "a true commentator," proving the congenial spirit of the poet of Thumb with that of the poet of Æneas. Addison got himself ridiculed for that fine natural taste, which felt all the witchery of our ballad-Enniuses, whose beauties, had Virgil lived with Addison, he would have inlaid into his Mosaic. The bigotry of classical taste, which is not always accompanied by a natural one, and rests securely on prescribed opinions and traditional excellence, long contemned our vernacular genius, spurning at the minstrelsy of the nation; Johnson's ridicule of Percy's Reliques had its hour, but the more poetical mind of Scott has brought us back to home feelings, to domestic manners, and eternal nature.

of wit, fancy, and hope, and an easy, indolent one, whose genial hours force up friends like hot-house plants, that bloom and flower in the spot where they are raised, but will not endure the change of place and season—this wit caught the tone of Swift, and because, as his editor tells us, "he had some friends in the ministry, and thought he could not take a better way to oblige them than by showing his dislike to a gentleman who had so much endeavoured to oppose them," he sat down to write a libel with all the best humour imaginable; for, adds this editor, "he was so far from having any personal pique or enmity against Mr. Steele, that at the time of his writing he did not so much as know him, even by sight." This principle of "having some friends in the ministry," and not "any knowledge" of the character to be attacked, has proved a great source of invention to our political adventurers;—thus Dr. Wagstaffe was fully enabled to send down to us a character where the moral and literary qualities of a genius, to whom this country owes so much as the father of periodical papers, are immolated to his political purpose. This severe character passed through several editions. However the careless Steele might be willing to place the elaborate libel to the account of party writings, if he did not feel disturbed at reproaches and accusations, which are confidently urged, and at critical animadversions, to which the negligence of his style sometimes laid him too open, his insensibility would have betrayed a depravity in his morals and taste which never entered into his character*.

* I shall content myself with referring to "The Character of Richard St—le, Esq.," in Dr. Wagstaffe's Miscellaneous Works, 1726. Considering that he had no personal knowledge of his victim, one may be well surprised at his entering so deeply into his private history; but of such a character as Steele the private history is usually too public—a mass of scandal for the select curious. Poor Steele, we are told, was "arrested for the maintenance of his bastards, and afterwards printed a *proposal* that the public should take care of them;" got into the House "not to be arrested;"—"his *set* speeches there, which he designs to get *extempore* to speak in the House." For his literary character we are told that "Steele was a jay who borrowed a feather from the peacock, another from the bullfinch, and another from the magpye; so that *Dick* is made up of borrowed colours; he borrowed his humour from Estcourt, criticism of Addison, his poetry of Pope, and his politics of Ridpath; so that his qualifications as a man of genius, like Mr. T—s, as a member of parliament, *lie in thirteen parishes*." Such are the pillows made up for genius to rest its head on!

Steele was doomed even to lose the friendship of Addison amid political discords; but on that occasion Steele showed that his taste for literature could not be injured by political animosity. It was at the close of Addison's life, and on occasion of the Peerage Bill, Steele published "The Plebeian," a cry against enlarging the aristocracy. Addison replied with "The Old Whig;" Steele rejoined without alluding to the person of his opponent. But "The Old Whig" could not restrain his political feelings, and contemptuously described "little Dicky, whose trade it was to

Wagstaffe has sometimes delicate humour; Steele, who often wrote in haste, necessarily wrote incorrectly. Steele had this sentence: "And ALL, as one man, will join in a common indignation against ALL who would perplex our obedience:" on which our pleasant critic remarks—"Whatever contradiction there is, as some suppose, in *all joining against all*, our author has good authority for what he says; and it may be proved, in spite of Euclid or Sir Isaac, that everything consists of *two alls*, that these *alls* are capable of being divided and subdivided into as many *alls* as you please, and so *ad infinitum*. The following lines may serve for an illustration:—

'Three children sliding on the ice
Upon a summer's day;
As it fell out, they all fell in;
The rest they ran away.'

"Though this polite author does not directly say there are *two alls*, yet he implies as much; for I would ask any *reasonable* man what can be understood by *the rest they ran away*, but the *other all* we have been speaking of? The world may see that I can exhibit the beauties, as well as quarrel with the faults, of his composition, but I hope he will not value himself on his *hasty productions*."

Poor Steele, with the best humour, bore these perpetual attacks, not however without an occasional groan, just enough to record his feelings. In one of his wild, yet well-meant projects, of the invention of "a fish-pool, or vessel for importing fish alive, 1718," he complains of calumnies and impertinent observations on him, and seems to lay some to the account of his knighthood:—"While he was pursuing what he believed might conduce to the common good, he gave the syllables *Richard Steele* to the publick, to be used and treated as they should think fit; he must go on in *the same indifference*, and allow the TOWN *their usual liberty with his name*, which I find they think they have much more room to sport with than formerly, as it is lengthened with the monosyllable SIR."

write pamphlets." Steele replied with his usual warmth; but indignant at the charge of "vassalage," he says, "I will end this paper, by firing every free breast with that noble exhortation of the tragedian—

'Remember, O my friends! the laws, the rights,
The generous plan of power deliver'd down
From age to age,' &c."

Thus delicately he detects the anonymous author, and thus energetically commends, while he reproves him!

Hooke (a Catholic), after he had written his Roman History, published "Observations on Vertot, Middleton, &c. on the Roman Senate," in which he particularly treated Dr. Middleton with a disrespect for which the subject gave no occasion: this was attributed to the Doctor's *offensive* letter from Rome. Spelman, in replying to this concealed motive of the Catholic, reprehends him with equal humour and bitterness for his desire of *roasting a Protestant parson*.

Our taste, rather than our passions, is here concerned; but the moral sense still more so. The malice of faction has long produced this literary calamity; yet great minds have not always degraded themselves; not always resisted the impulse of their finer feelings, by hardening them into insensibility, or goading them in the fury of a misplaced revenge. How delightful it is to observe Marvell, the presbyterian and republican wit, with that generous temper that instantly discovers the alliance of genius, warmly applauding the great work of Butler, which covered his own party with odium and ridicule. "He is one of an excellent wit," says Marvell; "and whoever dislikes the choice of his subject, cannot but commend the performance *."

Clarendon's profound genius could not expand into the same liberal feelings. He highly commends May for his learning, his wit and language, and for his Supplement to Lucan, which he considered as "one of the best epic poems in the English language;" but this great spirit sadly winces in the soreness of his feelings when he alludes to May's "History of the Parliament;" then we discover that this late "ingenious person" performed his part "so meanly, that he seems to have lost his wits when he left his honesty." Behold the political criticism in literature! However we may incline to respect the feelings of Clarendon, this will not save his judgment nor his candour. We read May now, as well as Clarendon; nor is the work of May that of a man who "had lost his wits," nor is it "meanly performed." Warburton, a keen critic of the writers of that unhappy and that glorious age for both parties, has pronounced this History to be "a just composition, according to the rules of history; written with much judgment, penetration, manliness, and spirit, and with a candour that will greatly increase your esteem, when you understand that he wrote by order of his masters the Parliament."

Thus have authors and their works endured the violations of party feelings; a calamity in our national literature which has produced much false and unjust criticism †. The better spirit of the present times will maintain a safer and a more honourable principle,—the true objects of LITERATURE, the cultivation of the intellectual faculties, stand entirely unconnected with POLITICS and RELIGION, let this be the imprescriptible right of an author. In our free country unhappily they have not been separated—they run together, and in the ocean of human opinions, the salt and bitterness of these mightier waves have infected the clear waters from the springs of the Muses. I once read of a certain river that ran through the sea, without mixing with it, preserving its crystalline purity, and all its sweetness during its course; so that it tasted the same at the Line as at the Poles. This stream indeed is only to be found in the geography of an old romance; literature should be this magical stream!

* Rehearsal transprosed, p. 45.

† The late Gilbert Wakefield is an instance where the political and theological opinions of a recluse student tainted his pure literary works. Condemned as an enraged Jacobin by those who were unitarians in politics, and rejected, because he was a unitarian in religion, by the orthodox, poor Wakefield's literary labours were usually reduced to the value of waste-paper. We smile, but half in sorrow, in reading a letter, where he says, "I meditate a beginning, during the winter, of my criticisms on all the ancient Greek and Latin authors, *by small piecemeals, on the cheapest possible paper, and at the least possible expense of printing*. As I can never do more than barely indemnify myself, I shall print only 250 copies." He half-ruined himself by his splendid edition of Lucretius, which could never obtain even common patronage from the opulent friends of classical literature. Since his death it has been reprinted, and is no doubt now a marketable article for the bookseller; so that if some authors are not successful for themselves, it is a comfort to think how useful, in a variety of shapes, they are made so to others. Even Gilbert's "contracted scheme of publication" he was compelled to abandon! Yet the classic erudition of Wakefield was confessed, and is still remembered. No one will doubt that we have lost a valuable addition to our critical stores by this literary persecution, were it only in the present instance; but examples are too numerous!

HOBBES AND HIS QUARRELS;

INCLUDING

AN ILLUSTRATION OF HIS CHARACTER.

Why HOBBES disguised his sentiments—why his philosophy degraded him—of the sect of the HOBBISTS—his LEVIATHAN; its principles adapted to existing circumstances—the author's difficulties on its first appearance—the system originated in his fears, and was a contrivance to secure the peace of the nation—its duplicity and studied ambiguity illustrated by many facts—the advocate of the national religion—accused of atheism—HOBBES's religion—his temper too often tried—attacked by opposite parties—Bishop FELL's ungenerous conduct—makes HOBBES regret that juries do not consider the quarrels of authors of any moment—the mysterious panic which accompanied him through life—its probable cause—he pretends to recant his opinions—he is speculatively bold, and practically timorous—an extravagant specimen of the anti-social philosophy—the SELFISM of HOBBES—his high sense of his works, in regard to foreigners and posterity—his monstrous egotism—his devotion to his literary pursuits—the despotic principle of the LEVIATHAN of an innocent tendency—the fate of systems of opinions.

THE history of the philosopher of Malmesbury exhibits a large picture of literary controversy, where we may observe how a persecuting spirit in the times drives the greatest men to take refuge in the meanest arts of subterfuge. Compelled to disguise their sentiments, they will not however suppress them; and hence, all their ambiguous proceedings; all that ridicule, and irony, and even recantation, with which ingenious minds, when forced to employ, have never failed to try the patience, or the sagacity, of intolerance *.

The character of Hobbes will, however, serve a higher moral design. The force of his intellect, the originality of his views, and the keenest

* Shaftesbury has thrown out, on this head, some important truths:—"If men are forbid to speak their minds *seriously*, they will do it *ironically*. If they find it dangerous to do so, they will then redouble their disguise, *involve themselves into mysteriousness*, and talk so as hardly to be understood.—The *persecuting* spirit has raised the *bantering* one. The higher the slavery, the more exquisite the buffoonery." Vol. i. p. 71. The subject of our present inquiry is a very remarkable instance of "involving himself into mysteriousness." To this cause we owe the strong raillery of Marvell; the cloudy "Oracles of Reason" of Blount; and the formidable, though gross burlesque, of Hickeringill, the rector of All-Saints, in Colchester. "Of him (says the editor of his collected works, 1716), the greatest writers of our times trembled at his pen; and as great a genius as Sir Roger L'Estrange's was, it submitted to his *superior way of reasoning*"—that is, to a most extraordinary burlesque spirit, in politics and religion. But even he who made others tremble, felt the terrors he inflicted; for he complains that "some who have thought his pen too sharp and smart; those who have been galled, sore men where the skin's off, have long lain to catch for somewhat to accuse me—upon such touchy subjects, a man had need have the *dexterity to split a hair*, to handle them pertinently, usefully, and yet *safely* and *warily*."—Such men, however, cannot avoid their fate: they will be persecuted, however they succeed in "splitting a hair;" and it is then they have recourse to the most absurd *subterfuges*, as our Hobbes was compelled to. Thus, also, it happened to Woolston, who wrote in a ludicrous way, "Blasphemies" against the miracles of Christ; calling them "tales and rodomontados." He rested his defence on this subterfuge; that

sagacity of observation, place him in the first order of minds; but he has mortified, and then degraded man into a mere selfish animal. From a cause we shall discover, he never looked on human nature but in terror or in contempt. The inevitable consequence of that mode of thinking, or that system of philosophy, is to make the philosopher the abject creature he has himself imagined; and it is then he libels the species, from his own individual experience*. — More generous tempers, men endowed with warmer imaginations, awake to sympathies of a higher nature, will indignantly reject the system, which has reduced the unlucky system-maker himself to such a pitiable condition.

Hobbes was one of those original thinkers who create a new era in the philosophical history of their nation and perpetuate their name, by leaving it to a sect†.

"it was meant to place the Christian religion on a better footing," &c. But the Court answered, that "if the author of a treasonable libel should write at the conclusion, *God save the king!* it would not excuse him."

* The moral axiom of Solon "KNOW THYSELF" (*Nosce teipsum*), applied by the ancient sage as a corrective for our own pride and vanity, Hobbes contracts into a narrow principle, when, in his introduction to "The Leviathan," he would infer, that by this self-inspection, we are enabled to determine on the thoughts and passions of other men; and thus, he would make the taste, the feelings, the experience of the individual decide for all mankind. This simple error has produced all the dogmas of Cynicism; for the Cynic is one whose insulated feelings, being all of the selfish kind, can imagine no other stirrer of even our best affections, and strains even our loftiest virtues into pitiful motives. Two noble authors, men of the most dignified feelings, have protested against this principle. Lord Shaftesbury keenly touches the characters of Hobbes and Rochester:— "Sudden courage, says our modern philosopher (Hobbes) is anger. If so, courage, considered as constant, and belonging to a character, must, in his account, be defined constant anger, or anger constantly recurring. All men, says a witty poet (Rochester), would be cowards, if they durst: that the poet and the philosopher both were cowards, may be yielded, perhaps, without dispute! they may have spoken the best of their knowledge." SHAFTESBURY, vol. i. p. 119.

With an heroic spirit, that virtuous statesman, Lord Clarendon, rejects the degrading notion of Hobbes. When *he* looked into his own breast, he found that courage was a real virtue, which had induced him, had it been necessary, to have shed his blood as a patriot. But death, in the judgment of Hobbes, was the most terrible event, and to be avoided by any means. Lord Clarendon draws a parallel between a "man of courage" and one of the disciples of Hobbes, "brought to die together, by a judgment they cannot avoid."—"How comes it to pass, that one of these undergoes death, with no other concernment than as if he were going any other journey; and the other with such confusion and trembling, that he is even without life before he dies; if it were true, that all men fear alike upon the like occasion?" *Survey of the Leviathan*, p. 14.

† They were distinguished as *Hobbists*, and the opinions as *Hobbianism*. Their chief happened to be born on a Good Friday; and in the metrical history of his own life, he seems to have considered it as a remarkable event. An atom had its weight in the scales by which his mighty egotism weighed itself. He thus marks the day of his birth, innocently enough:—

Natus erat noster Servator Homo-Deus annos
Mille et quingentos, octo quoque undecies.

But the *Hobbists* declared more openly (as Wood tells us), that "as our Saviour Christ went out of the world on that day, to save the men of the world; so another saviour came into the world on that day to save them!"

That the sect spread abroad, as well as at home, is told us by Lord Clarendon, in the preface to his "Survey of the Leviathan." The qualities of the author, as well as the book, were well adapted for proselytism; for Clarendon, who was intimately acquainted with him, notices his confidence in conversation—his never allowing himself to be contradicted—his bold inferences—the novelty of his expressions—and his probity, and a life free from scandal. "The humour and inclination of the time to all kind of paradoxes," was indulged by a pleasant clear style, an appearance of order and method, hardy paradoxes, and accommodating principles to existing circumstances.

Who were the sect composed of? The monstrous court of Charles II.—the grossest materialists! The secret history of that court could scarcely find a Suetonius among us. But our author was frequently in the hands of those who could never have comprehended what they pretended to admire; this appears by a publication of the times, intituled, "Twelve ingenious Characters, &c. 1686," where, in that of a town-fop, who, "for genteel breeding, posts to town, by his mother's indulgence, three or four wild companions, half-a-dozen bottles of Burgundy, *two leaves of Leviathan*," and some few other obvious matters, shortly make this young philosopher nearly lose his moral and physical existence. "He will not confess himself an Atheist, yet he

The eloquent and thinking Madame de Staël has asserted, that "Hobbes was an *Atheist* and a *Slave*." Yet I still think that Hobbes believed, and proved, the necessary existence of a Deity, and that he loved freedom, as every sage desires it. It is now time to offer an apology for one of those great men who are the contemporaries of all ages, and, by fervent inquiry, to dissipate that traditional cloud which hangs over one of "those monuments of the mind" which Genius has built with imperishable materials.

The author of the far-famed "Leviathan" is considered as a vehement advocate for absolute monarchy. This singular production may, however, be equally adapted for a republic; and the monstrous principle may be so innocent in its nature, as even to enter into our own constitution, which presumes to be neither *.

As "The Leviathan" produced the numerous controversies of Hobbes, a history of this great moral curiosity enters into our subject.

Hobbes, living in times of anarchy, perceived the necessity of re-establishing authority with more than its usual force. But how were the divided opinions of men to melt together, and where in the state was to be placed *absolute power*? for a remedy of less force he could not discover for that disordered state of society which he witnessed. Was the sovereign or the people to be invested with that mighty power which was to keep every other quiescent?—a topic which had been discussed for ages, and still must be, as the humours of men incline—was, I believe, a matter perfectly indifferent to our philosopher, provided that whatever might be the government, absolute power could somewhere be lodged in it, to force men to act in strict conformity. He discovers his perplexity in the dedication of his work. "In a way beset with those that contend on one side for too great liberty, on the other side for too much authority, 'tis hard to pass between the points of both unwounded." It happened that our cynical Hobbes had no respect for his species; terrified at anarchy, he seems to have lost all fear when he flew to absolute power,—a sovereign remedy unworthy of a great spirit, though convenient for a timid one, like his own. Hobbes considered men merely as animals of prey, living in a state of perpetual hostility, and his solitary principle of action was self-preservation at any price.

He conjured up a political phantom, a favourite and fanciful notion, that haunted him through life. He imagined that the *many* might be more easily managed by making them up into an artificial *One*, and calling this wonderful political unity the *Commonwealth*, or the *Civil Power*, or the *Sovereign*, or by whatever name was found most pleasing; he personified it by the image of "Leviathan †."

* Hobbes, in defending Thucydides, whom he has so admirably translated, from the charge of some obscurity in his design, observes that "Marcellinus saith he was obscure, on purpose that the common people might not understand him; and not unlikely, for a wise man should so write (though in words understood by all men,) that wise men only should be able to commend him." Thus early in life Hobbes had determined on a principle which produced all his studied ambiguity, involved him in so much controversy, and, in some respects, preserved him in an inglorious security.

† Hobbes explains the image in his Introduction. He does not disguise his opinion that *Men* may be converted into *Automatons*; and if he were not very ingenious, we might lose our patience. He was so delighted with this whimsical fancy of his "artificial man," that he carried it on to Government itself, and employed the en-

boasts aloud that he holds his *gospel* from *the Apostle of Malmesbury*, though it is more than probable he never read, at least understood, ten leaves of *that unlucky author*." If such were his wretched disciples, Hobbes was indeed "an unlucky author," for their morals and habits were quite opposite to those of their master. EACHARD, in the preface to his Second Dialogue, 1673, exhibits a very Lucianic arrangement of his disciples—Hobbes's "Pit, Box, and Gallery Friends." The *Pit-friends* were sturdy practicants, who, when they hear that "Ill-nature, Debauchery, and Irreligion, were Mathematics and Demonstration, clap and shout, and swear by all that comes from Malmesbury." The *Gallery* are "a sort of small, soft, little, pretty, fine gentlemen, who having some little wit, some little modesty, some little remain of conscience and country religion, could not hector it as the former, but quickly learnt to chirp and giggle when t'other clapt and shouted." But "the Don-admirers, and *Box-friends* of Mr. Hobbes are men of gravity and reputation, who will scarce simper in favour of the philosopher, but can make shift to nod and nod again." Even amid this wild satire, we find a piece of truth in a dark corner; for the satirist confesses, that "his Gallery-friends, who were such resolved practicants in *Hobbianism* (by which the satirist means all kinds of licentiousness) would most certainly have been so, had there never been any such man as Mr. Hobbes in the world." Why then place to the account of the philosopher those gross immoralities which he never sanctioned? The life of Hobbes is without a stain! He had other friends besides these "Box, Pit, and Gallery" gentry—the learned of Europe, and many of the great and good men of his own country.

At first sight the ideal monster might pass for an innocent conceit; and there appears even consummate wisdom, in erecting a colossal power for our common security; but Hobbes assumed, that *Authority* was to be supported to its extreme pitch. *Force* with him appeared to constitute *right*, and *unconditional submission* then became a *duty:* these were consequences quite natural to one who at his first step degraded man by comparing him to a watch, and who would not have him go but with the same nicety of motion, wound up by a great key.

To be secure, by this system of Hobbes, we must at least lose the glory of our existence as intellectual beings. He would persuade us into the dead quietness of a commonwealth of puppets, while he was consigning into the grasp of his "Leviathan," or sovereign power, the wire that was to communicate a mockery of vital motion—a principle of action without freedom. The system was equally desirable to the Protector Cromwell as to the regal Charles. A conspiracy against mankind could not alarm their governors: it is not therefore surprising that the usurper offered Hobbes the office of Secretary of State; and that he was afterwards pensioned by the monarch.

A philosophical system, moral or political, is often nothing more than a temporary expedient to turn aside the madness of the times by substituting what offers an appearance of relief; nor is it a little influenced by the immediate convenience of the philosopher himself; his personal character enters a good deal into the system. The object of Hobbes in his "Leviathan" was always ambiguous, because it was, in truth, one of these systems of expediency, conveniently adapted to what has been termed of late "existing circumstances." His sole aim was to keep all things in peace, by creating one mightiest power in the state, to suppress instantly all other powers that might rise in insurrection. In his times, the establishment of despotism was the only political restraint he could discover of sufficient force to chain man down, amid the turbulence of society; but this concealed end he is perpetually shifting and disguising; for the truth is, no man loved slavery less*.

graver to impress the monstrous personification on our minds, even clearer than by his reasonings. The curious design forms the frontispiece of "The Leviathan." He borrowed the name from that sea-monster, that mightiest of powers, which Job has told us is not to be compared with any on earth. The sea-monster is here, however, changed into a colossal man, entirely made up of little men from all the classes of society, bearing in the right hand the sword, and in the left the crosier. The compartments are full of political allegories. An expression of Lord Clarendon's in the Preface to his "Survey of the Leviathan," shows our philosopher's infatuation to this "idol of the Den," as Lord Bacon might have called the intellectual illusion of the philosopher. Hobbes, when at Paris, showed a proof-sheet or two of his work to Clarendon, who, he soon discovered, could not approve of the hardy tenets. "He frequently came to me," says his Lordship, "and told me, his book (*which he would call* LEVIATHAN) was then printing in England. He said, that he knew when I read his book I would not like it, and mentioned some of his conclusions: upon which I asked him, why he would publish such doctrine; to which, after a discourse, *between jest and earnest*, he said, *The truth is, I have a mind to go home!*" Some philosophical systems have, probably, been raised "between jest and earnest;" yet here was a text-book for the despot, as it is usually accepted, deliberately given to the world, for no other purpose than that the Philosopher was desirous of changing his lodgings at Paris for his old apartments in London!

* The duplicity of the system is strikingly revealed by Burnet, who tells of Hobbes, that "he put all the law in the will of the *prince* or the *people;* for he writ his book *at first* in favour of *absolute monarchy*, but turned it afterwards to gratify the *republican party*. These were his true principles, though he had disguised them for deceiving unwary readers." It is certain Hobbes became a suspected person among the royalists. They were startled at the open extravagance of some of his political paradoxes; such as his notion of the necessity of extirpating all the *Greek* and *Latin* authors, "by reading of which, men from their childhood have gotten a habit of licentious controuling the actions of their sovereigns," p. 111. But the doctrines of liberty were not found only among the Greeks and Romans; the *Hebrews* were stern republicans; and liberty seems to have had a nobler birth in the North among our German ancestors, than perhaps in any other part of the globe. It is certain that the Puritans, who warmed over the Bible more than the classic historians, had their heads full of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; the hanging of the five kings of Joshua; and the fat king of the Moabites, who in his summer-room received a present, and then a dagger, from the left-handed Jewish Jacobin. Hobbes curiously compares "The *tyrannophobia*, or fear of being strongly governed," to the *hydrophobia*. "When a monarchy is once bitten to the quick by those democratical writers, and, by their poison, men seem to be converted into dogs," his remedy is, "a strong monarch," or "the exercise of entire sovereignty," p. 171; and

The system of Hobbes could not be limited to politics: he knew that the safety of the people's morals required an *Established Religion*. The alliance between church and state had been so violently shaken, that it was necessary to cement them once more. As our philosopher had been terrified in his politics by the view of its contending factions; so, in religion, he experienced the same terror at the hereditary rancours of its multiplied sects. He could devise no other means than to

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that the authority he would establish should be immutable, he hardily asserts, that "the ruling power cannot be punished for mal-administration." Yet in this elaborate system of despotism are interspersed some strong republican axioms, as The safety of the people is the supreme law,—The public good to be preferred to that of the individual:—and that God made the one for the many, and not the many for the one. The effect the LEVIATHAN produced on the royal party was quite unexpected by the author. His hardy principles were considered as a satire on arbitrary power, and Hobbes himself as a concealed favourer of democracy. This has happened more than once with such vehement advocates. Our philosopher must have been thunderstruck at the insinuation, for he had presented the royal exile, as Clarendon, in his "Survey" informs us, with a magnificent copy of "The Leviathan," written on vellum; this beautiful specimen of calligraphy may still be seen, as we learn from the Gentleman's Magazine for January 1813, where the curiosity is fully described. The suspicion of Hobbes's principles was so strong, that it produced his sudden dismissal from the presence of Charles II. when at Paris. The king, indeed, said he believed Hobbes intended him no hurt; and Hobbes said of the king, that "his majesty understood his writings better than his accusers." However, happy was Hobbes to escape from France, where the officers were in pursuit of him, amid snowy roads and nipping blasts. The lines in his metrical life open a dismal winter scene for an old man on a stumbling horse:

"Frigus erat, nix alta, senex ego, ventus acerbus,
Vexat equus sternax, et salebrosa via—"

A curious spectacle! to observe, under a despotic government, its vehement advocate in flight!

The ambiguity of the Leviathan seemed still more striking, when Hobbes came, at length, to place the right of government merely in what he terms "the Seat of Power"—a wonderful principle of expediency; for this was equally commodious to the republicans and to the royalists. By this principle, the republicans maintained the right of Cromwell, since his authority was established, while it absolved the royalists from their burthensome allegiance; for, according to "The Leviathan," Charles was the English monarch only, when in a condition to force obedience; and, to calm tender consciences, the philosopher further fixed on that precise point of time, "when a subject may obey an unjust conqueror." After the Restoration, it was subtilely urged by the Hobbists, that this very

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principle had greatly served the royal cause; for it afforded a plea for the emigrants to return, by compounding for their estates, and joining with those royalists who had remained at home in an open submission to the established government; and thus they were enabled to concert their measures in common, for reinstating the old monarchy. Had the Restoration never taken place, Hobbes would have equally insisted on the soundness of his doctrine: he would have asserted the title of Richard Cromwell to the Protectorate, if Richard had had the means to support it, as zealously as he afterwards did that of Charles II. to the throne, when the king had firmly re-established it. The philosophy of Hobbes, therefore, is not dangerous in any government; its sole aim is to preserve it from intestine divisions; but for this purpose, he was for reducing men to mere machines. With such little respect he treated the species, and with such tenderness the individual!

I will give Hobbes's own justification, after the restoration of Charles II. when accused by the great mathematician, Dr. Wallis, a republican under Cromwell, of having written his work in defence of Oliver's government. Hobbes does not deny that "he placed the right of government wheresoever should be the strength." Most subtilely he argues, how this very principle "was designed in behalf of the faithful subjects of the king," after they had done their utmost to defend his rights and person. The government of Cromwell being established, these found themselves without the protection of a government of their own, and therefore might lawfully promise obedience to their victor, for the saving of their lives and fortunes; and more, they ought even to protect that authority in war, by which they were themselves protected in peace. But this plea, which he so ably urged in favour of the royalists, will not, however, justify those who, like Wallis, voluntarily submitted to Cromwell, because they were always the enemies of the king; so that this submission to Oliver is allowed only to the royalists—a most admirable political paradox! The whole of the argument is managed with infinite dexterity, and is thus unexpectedly turned against his accusers themselves. The principle of "self-preservation" is carried on through the entire system of Hobbes.—"*Considerations upon the Reputation, Loyalty, &c. of Mr. Hobbes.*"

attack the mysteries and dogmas of theologians, those after-inventions and corruptions of Christianity, by which the artifices of their chiefs had so long split them into perpetual factions* : he therefore asserted, that the religion of the people ought to exist, in strict conformity to the will of the state†.

When Hobbes wrote against mysteries, the mere polemics sent forth a cry of his impiety; the philosopher was branded with Atheism ;—one of those artful calumnies, of which, after a man has washed himself clean, the stain will be found to have dyed the skin ‡.

To me it appears, that Hobbes, to put an end to these religious wars, which his age and country had witnessed, perpetually kindled by crazy

* The passage in Hobbes to which I allude, is in "The Leviathan," c. 32. He there says, sarcastically, "It is with the *mysteries of religion* as with wholesome pills for the sick, which, swallowed whole, have the virtue to cure; but, chewed, are for the most part cast up again without effect." Hobbes is often a wit: he was much pleased with this thought, for he had it in his *De Cive;* which, in the English translation, bears the title of "Philosophical Rudiments concerning Government and Society, 1651." There he calls "the wholesome pills," "bitter." He translated the *De Cive* himself; a circumstance which was not known till the recent appearance of Aubrey's papers.

† Warburton has most acutely distinguished between the intention of Hobbes, and that of some of his successors. The bishop does not consider Hobbes as an enemy to religion, not even to the Christian; and even doubts whether he has attacked it in "The Leviathan." At all events, he has "taken direct contrary measures from those of Bayle, Collins, Tindal, Bolingbroke, and all that school. They maliciously endeavoured to show, the Gospel was *unreasonable;* Hobbes, as reasonable as his admirable wit could represent it: they contended for the most unbounded *toleration*, Hobbes for the most rigorous *conformity*." See the "Alliance between Church and State," book i. c. v.—It is curious to observe the noble disciple of Hobbes, Lord Bolingbroke, a strenuous advocate for his political and moral opinions, enraged at what he calls his "High Church notions." Trenchard and Gordon, in their "Independent Whig," No. 44, that libel on the clergy, accuse them of *Atheism* and *Hobbism;* while some divines as earnestly reject Hobbes as an Atheist! Our temperate sage, though angried at that spirit of contradiction which he had raised, must, however, have sometimes smiled both on his advocates and his adversaries!

‡ The odious term of *Atheist* has been too often applied to many great men of our nation, by the hardy malignity of party. Were I to present a catalogue, the very names would refute the charge. Let us examine the religious sentiments of Hobbes. The materials for its investigation are not common, but it will prove a dissertation of facts. I warn some of my readers to escape from the tediousness, if they cannot value the curiosity.

Hobbes has himself thrown out an observation, in his life of Thucydides, respecting Anaxagoras, that "his opinions, being of a strain above the apprehension of the vulgar, procured him the estimation of an *Atheist*, which name they bestowed upon all men that thought not as they did of their ridiculous religion, and in the end cost him his life." This was a parallel case with Hobbes himself, except its close; which, however, seems always to have been in the mind of our philosopher.

Bayle, who is for throwing all things into doubt, acknowledging that the life of Hobbes was blameless, adds, one might, however, have been tempted to ask him this question:

> Heus age responde; minimum est quod scire laboro;
> *De Jove quid sentis?*—PERSIUS, Sat. ii. v. 17.
>
> Hark, now! resolve this one short question, friend!
> *What are thy thoughts of Jove?*

But Bayle, who compared himself to the Jupiter of Homer, powerful in gathering and then dispersing the clouds, dissipates the one he had just raised, by showing how "Hobbes might have answered the question with sincerity and belief, *according to the writers of his life.*"—But had Bayle known that Hobbes was the author of all the lives of himself, so partial an evidence might have raised another doubt with the great sceptic. It appears, by Aubrey's papers, that Hobbes did not wish his biography should appear when he was living, that he might not seem the author of it.

Baxter, who knew Hobbes intimately, ranks him with Spinosa, by a strong epithet for materialists—"The *Brutists*, Hobbes, and Spinosa." He tells us, that Selden would not have him in his chamber while dying, calling out, "No Atheists!" But by Aubrey's papers, it appears that Hobbes stood by the side of his dying friend. It is certain his enemies raised stories against him, and told them as suited their purpose. In the Lansdown MSS. I find Dr. Grenville, in a letter, relates how "Hobbes, when in France and like to die, betrayed such expressions of repentance to a great prelate, from whose mouth I had this relation, that he admitted him to the sacrament. But Hobbes afterwards made this a subject of ridicule in companies."—*Lansdown MSS.* 990—73.

Here is a strong accusation, and a fact too; yet,

when fully developed, the result will turn out greatly in favour of Hobbes.

Hobbes had a severe illness at Paris, which lasted six months, thus noticed in his metrical life:

Dein per sex menses morbo decumbo, propinque
Accinctus morti; nec fugio, illa fugit.

It happened that the famous Guy Patin was his physician; and in one of those amusing letters, where he puts down the events of the day, like a newspaper of the times, in No. 61, has given an account of his intercourse with the philosopher, in which he says that Hobbes endured such pain, that he would have destroyed himself—"*Qu'il avoit voulu se tuer.*"—Patin is a vivacious writer: we are not to take him *au pied de la lettre*. Hobbes was systematically tenacious of life: and, so far from attempting suicide, that he wanted even the courage to allow Patin to bleed him! It was during this illness that the Catholic party, who like to attack a Protestant in a state of unresisting debility, got his learned and intimate friend, Father Mersenne, to hold out all the benefits a philosopher might derive from their church. When Hobbes was acquainted with this proposed interview (says a French contemporary, whose work exists in MS., but is quoted in Joly's folio volume of Remarks on Bayle), the sick man answered, "Don't let him come for this; I shall laugh at him; and perhaps I may convert him myself." Father Mersenne did come; and when this missionary was opening on the powers of Rome, to grant a plenary pardon, he was interrupted by Hobbes—"Father, I have examined, a long time ago, all these points; I should be sorry to dispute now; you can entertain me in a more agreeable manner. When did you see Mr. Gassendi?"—The monk, who was a philosopher, perfectly understood Hobbes, and this interview never interrupted their friendship. A few days after, Dr. Cosin (afterwards Bishop of Durham), the great prelate whom Dr. Grenville alludes to, prayed with Hobbes, who first *stipulated* that the prayers should be those authorised by the *Church of England;* and he also received the sacrament with reverence. Hobbes says:—"Magnum hoc erga disciplinam Episcopalem signum erat reverentiæ."—It is evident, that the conversion of Father Mersenne, to which Hobbes facetiously alluded, could never be to Atheism, but to Protestantism; and had Hobbes been an Atheist, he would not have risked his safety, when he arrived in England, by his strict attendance to the *Church of England*, resolutely refusing to unite with any of the sects. His views of the national religion were not only enlightened, but in this respect he showed a boldness in his actions very unusual with him.

But the religion of Hobbes was "of a strain beyond the apprehension of the vulgar," and not very agreeable to some of the Church. A man may have peculiar notions respecting the Deity, and yet be far removed from Atheism; and in his political system, the Church may hold that subordinate place which some Bishops will not like. When Dr. Grenville tells us "Hobbes ridiculed in companies" certain matters, which the Doctor held sacred, this is not sufficient to accuse a man of Atheism, though it may prove him not to have held orthodox opinions. From the MS. collections of the French contemporary, who well knew Hobbes at Paris, I transcribe a remarkable observation:—"Hobbes said, that he was not surprised that the Independents, who were enemies of monarchy, could not bear it in heaven, and that therefore they placed there three Gods, instead of one; but he was astonished that the English bishops, and those Presbyterians who were favourers of monarchy, should persist in the same opinion concerning the Trinity. He added, that the Episcopalians ridiculed the Puritans, and the Puritans the Episcopalians; but that the wise ridiculed both alike."—*Lantiniana MS.* quoted by Joly, p. 434.

The *religion* of Hobbes was in *conformity* to *state and church*. He had, however, the most awful notions of the Divinity. He confesses he is unacquainted with "the nature of God, but not with the *necessity* of the existence of the Power of all powers, and First Cause of all causes: so that we know that God is, though not what he is." See his "Human Nature," chap. xi. But was the God of Hobbes the inactive deity of Epicurus, who takes no interest in the happiness or misery of his created beings; or, as Madame de Staël has expressed it, with the point and felicity of French antithesis, was this "an Atheism with a God?" This consequence some of his adversaries would draw from his principles, which Hobbes indignantly denies. He has done more; for, in his *De Corpore Politico*, he declares his belief of all the fundamental points of Christianity, part i. c. 4, p. 116. Ed. 1652. But he was an open enemy to those "who presume, out of Scripture, by their own interpretation, to raise any *doctrine to the understanding*, concerning those things which are incomprehensible;" and he refers to St. Paul, who gives a good rule "*to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man* the measure of faith."—Rom. xii. 3.

* It is remarkable, that when Hobbes adopted

fanatics and intolerant dogmatists, insisted that the *Crosier* should be carried in the *left* hand of his Leviathan, and the *sword* in his right*. He testified, as strongly as man could, by his public

actions, that he was a Christian of the Church of England, "as by law established," and no enemy to the episcopal order; but he dreaded the encroachments of the Churchmen in his political system; jealous of that *supremacy* at which some of them aimed. Many enlightened bishops sided with the philosopher *. At a time when Milton sullenly withdrew from every public testimonial of divine worship, Hobbes, with more enlightened views, *attended Church service*, and strenuously supported *an established religion*; yet one is deemed a religious man, and the other an Atheist! Were the *actions* of men to be decisive of their characters, the reverse might be inferred.

The temper of our philosopher, so ill adapted to contradiction, was too often tried; and if, as his adversary, Harrington, in the "Oceana," says, "Truth be a spark, whereunto objections are like bellows," the mind of Hobbes, for half a century, was a very forge, where the hammer was always beating, and the flame was never allowed to be extinguished. Charles II. strikingly described his worrying assailants. "Hobbes," said the king, "was a bear against whom the Church played their young dogs, in order to exercise them †." A strange repartee has preserved the causticity of his wit. Dr. Eachard, perhaps one of the prototypes of Swift, wrote two admirable ludicrous dialogues, in ridicule of Hobbes's "State of Nature ‡." These were much extolled, and kept up the laugh against the philosophic misanthropist: once when he was told that the clergy said that "Eachard had crucified Hobbes," he

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the principle that the *ecclesiastical* should be united with the *sovereign* power, he was then actually producing that portentous change which had terrified Luther and Calvin; who, even in their day, were alarmed by a new kind of political Antichrist; that "Cæsarean Popery" which Stubbe so much dreaded, and which I have here noticed, p. 219. Luther predicted, that as the pope had at times seized on the political sword, so this "Cæsarean Popery," under the pretence of policy, would grasp the ecclesiastical crosier, to form a *political church*. The curious reader is referred to Wolfius, *Lectionum Memorabilium et reconditarum*, vol. ii. cent. x. p. 987. Calvin, in his commentary on Amos, has also a remarkable passage on this *political church*; animadverting on Amaziah, the priest, who would have proved the Bethel worship warrantable, because settled by the royal authority: "It is the king's chapel." Amos, vii. 13. Thus Amaziah, adds Calvin, assigns the king a double function, and maintains it is in his power to transform religion into what shape he pleases, while he charges Amos with disturbing the public repose, and encroaching on the royal prerogative. Calvin zealously reprobates the conduct of those inconsiderate persons, "who give the civil magistrate a sovereignty in religion, and dissolve the church into the state." The supremacy in church and state, conferred on Henry VIII., was the real cause of these alarms; but the passion of domination raged not less fiercely in Calvin than in Henry VIII.; in the enemy of kings, than in kings themselves. Were the *forms* of religion more celestial, from the sanguinary hands of that tyrannical reformer, than from those of the reforming tyrant? The system of our philosopher was, to lay all the wild spirits which have haunted us, in the chimerical shapes of *Non-conformity*. I have often thought, after much observation on our Church history since the Reformation, that *the devotional feelings* have not been so much concerned in this bitter opposition to the National Church, as the rage of dominion, the spirit of vanity, the sullen pride of sectarism, and the delusions of madness.

* Hobbes himself tells us, that "some bishops are content to hold their authority from *the king's letters patents*; others will needs have somewhat more they know not what of *divine rights*, &c., *not acknowledging the power of the king*. It is a relic still remaining of the venom of popish ambition, lurking in that *seditious distinction and division* between the power *spiritual* and *civil*. The safety of the state does not depend on the safety of the clergy, but on the *entireness of the sovereign power*."

Considerations upon the Reputation, &c. of Mr. Hobbes, p. 44.

† This royal observation is recorded in the "Sorberiana." Sorbiere gleaned the anecdote during his residence in England. By the "Aubrey Papers," which have been published since I composed this article, I find that Charles II. was greatly delighted by the wit and repartees of Hobbes, who was at once bold and happy in making his stand amidst the court wits. The king, whenever he saw Hobbes, who had the privilege of being admitted into the royal presence, would exclaim, "Here comes the bear to be baited." This did not allude to his native roughness, but the force of his resistance when attacked.

‡ See "Mr. Hobbes's State of Nature considered, in a Dialogue between Philautus and Timothy." The second dialogue is not contained in the eleventh edition of Eachard's Works, 1705, which, however, was long after his death, so careless were the publishers of those days of their authors' works. The literary bookseller, Tom Davies, who ruined himself by giving good editions of our old authors, has preserved it in his own.

bitterly retorted, "Why, then, don't they fall down and *worship* me*?"

The Leviathan was ridiculed by the wits, declaimed against by the republicans, denounced by the monarchists, and menaced by the clergy. The commonwealth-man, the dreamer of equality, Harrington, raged at the subtile advocate for despotic power; but the glittering bubble of his fanciful "Oceana" only broke on the mighty sides of the Leviathan, wasting its rainbow tints: the mitred Bramhall, at "The catching of Leviathan, or the great Whale," flung his harpoon, demonstrating consequences from the principles of Hobbes, which he as eagerly denied. But our ambiguous philosopher had the hard fate to be attacked even by those who were labouring to the same end†. The literary wars of Hobbes were fierce and long; heroes he encountered, but heroes too were fighting by his side. Our chief himself wore a kind of magical armour; for, either he denied the consequences his adversaries deduced from his principles, or he surprised by new conclusions, which many could not discover in them; but by such means, he had not only the art of infusing confidence among the *Hobbists*, but the greater one of dividing his adversaries, who often retreated, rather fatigued than victorious. Hobbes owed this partly to the happiness of a genius which excelled in controversy, but more, perhaps, to the advantage of the ground he occupied as a metaphysician: the usual darkness of that spot is favourable to those shiftings and turnings which the equivocal possessor may practise with an unwary assailant. Far different was the fate of Hobbes in the open daylight of mathematics: there his hardy genius lost him, and his sophistry could spin no web; as we shall see in the memorable war of twenty years waged between Hobbes and Dr. Wallis. But the gall of controversy was sometimes tasted, and the flames of persecution flashed at times in the closet of our philosopher. The ungenerous attack of Bishop Fell, who, in the Latin translation of Wood's "History of the University of Oxford," had converted eulogium into the most virulent abuse‡,

* "A Discourse concerning Irony, 1729," p. 13.

† Men of very opposite principles, but aiming at the same purpose, are reduced to a dilemma, by the spirit of party in controversy. Sir Robert Filmer, who wrote against "the Anarchy of a limited Monarchy," and "Patriarcha," to re-establish *absolute power*, derived it from the scriptural accounts of the patriarchal state. But Sir Robert and Hobbes, though alike the advocates for supremacy of power, were as opposite as possible on theological points. Filmer had the same work to perform, but he did not like the instruments of his fellow-labourer. His manner of proceeding with Hobbes shows his dilemma: he refutes the doctrine of the "Leviathan," while he confesses that Hobbes is right in the main. The philosopher's reasonings stand on quite another foundation than the scriptural authorities deduced by Filmer. The result therefore is, that Sir Robert had the trouble to confute the very thing he afterwards had to establish!

‡ It may be curious to some of my readers to preserve that part of Hobbes's Letter to Anthony Wood, in the rare tract of his Latin Life, in which, with great calmness, the philosopher has painfully collated the odious interpolations. All that was written in favour of the morals of Hobbes—of the esteem in which foreigners held him—of the royal patronage, &c., were maliciously erased. Hobbes thus notices the amendments of Bishop Fell:—

"Nimirum ubi mihi tu ingenium attribuis *Sobrium*, ille, deleto *Sobrio*, substituit *Acri*.

"Ubi tu scripseras *Libellum scripsit de Cive*, interposuit ille inter *Libellum* et *de Cive*, *rebus permiscendis natum*, de *Cive*, quod ita manifestè falsum est, &c.

"Quod, ubi tu de libro meo *Leviathan* scripsisti, primò, quod esset, *Vicinis gentibus notissimus* interposuit ille, *publico damno*. Ubi tu scripseras, *scripsit librum*, interposuit ille *monstrosissimum*."

A noble confidence in his own genius and celebrity breaks out in this Epistle to Wood. "In leaving out all that you have said of my character and reputation, the dean has injured you, but cannot injure me; for long since has my fame winged its way to a station from which it can never descend." One is surprised to find such a Miltonic spirit in the contracted soul of Hobbes, who in his own system might have cynically ridiculed the passion for fame, which, however, no man felt more than himself. In his controversy with Bishop Bramhall (whose book he was cautious not to answer till ten years after it was published, and his adversary was no more, pretending he had never heard of it till then!) he breaks out with the same feeling:—"What my works are he was no fit judge; but now he has provoked me, I will say thus much of them, that neither he, if he had lived, could—nor I, if I would, can—extinguish the light which is set up in the world by the greatest part of them."

It is curious to observe that an idea occurred to Hobbes, which some authors have attempted lately to put into practice against their critics—to prosecute them in a court of law; but the knowledge of mankind was one of the liveliest faculties of Hobbes's mind: he knew well to what account

without the participation of Wood, who resented it with his honest warmth, was only an arrow snatched from a quiver which was every day emptying itself on the devoted head of our ambiguous philosopher. Fell only vindicated himself by a fresh invective on "the most vain and waspish animal of Malmesbury," and Hobbes was too frightened to reply. This was the Fell whom it was so difficult to assign a reason for not liking:

"I don't like thee, Dr. Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell,
But I don't like thee, Dr. Fell!"

A curious incident in the history of the mind of this philosopher, was the mysterious panic which accompanied him to his latest day. It has not been denied that Hobbes was subject to occasional terrors: he dreaded to be left without company; and a particular instance is told, that on the Earl of Devonshire's removal from Chatsworth, the philosopher, then in a dying state, insisted on being carried away, though on a feather-bed. Various motives have been suggested to account for this extraordinary terror. Some declared he was afraid of Spirits; but he was too stout a Materialist * !—another, that he dreaded assassination; an ideal poniard indeed, might scare even a Materialist. But Bishop Atterbury, in a sermon on *the Terrors of Conscience*, illustrates their nature by the character of our philosopher. Hobbes is there accused of attempting to destroy the principles of religion against his own inward conviction: this would only prove the insanity of Hobbes! The Bishop shows, that "the disorders of *conscience* are not a *continued*, but an *intermitting* disease;" so that the patient may appear at intervals in seeming health and real ease, till the fits return: all this he applies to the case of our philosopher. In reasoning on human affairs, the shortest way will be to discover human motives. The spirit, or the assassin, of Hobbes, arose from the bill brought into parliament, when the nation was panic-struck on the fire of London, against Atheism and Profaneness; he had a notion that a writ *de heretico comburendo* was intended for him by Bishop Seth Ward, his *quondam* admirer †. His spirits would sink at those moments; for in the philosophy of Hobbes, the whole universe was concentrated in the small space of Self. There was no length he refused to go for what he calls "the natural right of preservation, which we all receive from the uncontrollable dictates of

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common minds place the injured feelings of authorship; yet were *a jury of literary men* to sit in judgment, we might have a good deal of business in the court for a long time; the critics and the authors would finally have a very useful body of reports and pleadings to appeal to: and the public would be highly entertained and greatly instructed. On this attack of Bishop Fell, Hobbes says, "I might perhaps have an action on the case against him, if it were worth my while; but juries seldom consider the Quarrels of Authors as of much moment."

* Bayle has conjured up an amusing theory of apparitions, to show that Hobbes might fear that a certain combination of atoms agitating his brain, might so disorder his mind that it would expose him to spectral visions; and being very timorous, and distrusting his imagination, he was averse to be left alone. Apparitions happen frequently in dreams, and they may happen, even to an incredulous man, when awake, for reading and hearing of them would revive their images—these images, adds Bayle, might play him some unlucky trick! We are here astonished at the ingenuity of a disciple of Pyrrho, who in his inquiries, after having exhausted all human evidence, seems to have demonstrated what he hesitates to believe! Perhaps the truth was, that the sceptical Bayle had not entirely freed himself from the traditions which were then still floating from the fire-side to the philosopher's closet: he points his pen, as Æneas brandished his sword at the Gorgons and Chimæras that darkened the entrance of Hell; wanting the admonitions of the Sibyl, he would have rushed in—

Et frustra ferro diverberet umbras.

† The papers of Aubrey confirm my suggestion. I shall give the words: "There was a report, and surely true, that in parliament, not long after the king was settled, some of the bishops made a motion to have the good old gentleman burned for a heretique; which he hearing, feared that his papers might be searched by their order, and he told me he had burned part of them." P. 612. When Aubrey requested Waller to write verses on Hobbes, the poet said that he was afraid of the Churchmen. Aubrey tells us, "I have often heard him say that he was not afraid of *Sprights*, but afraid of being knocked on the head for five or ten pounds which rogues might think he had in his chamber." This reason given by Hobbes for his frequent alarms was an evasive reply for too curious and talkative an inquirer. Hobbes has not concealed the cause of his terror in his metrical life:

"Tunc venit in mentem mihi Dorislaus et
Ascham,
Tanquam proscripto terror ubique aderat."

Dr. Dorislaus and Ascham had fallen under the daggers of proscription.

Necessity." He exhausts his imagination in the forcible descriptions of his extinction: "the terrible enemy of nature, Death," is always before him. The "inward horror" he felt of his extinction, Lord Clarendon thus alludes to: "If Mr. Hobbes and some other man were both condemned to death (which is the most formidable thing Mr. Hobbes can conceive)"—and Dr. Eachard rallies him on the infinite anxiety he bestowed on his *body*, and thinks that "he had better compound to be kicked and beaten twice a day, than to be so dismally tortured about an old rotten carcase." Death was perhaps the only subject about which Hobbes would not dispute.

Such a Materialist was then liable to terrors; and though, when his Works were burnt, the author had not a hair singed, the convulsion of the panic often produced, as Bishop Atterbury expresses it, "an intermitting disease."

Persecution terrified Hobbes, and magnanimity and courage were no virtues in his philosophy. He went about hinting that he was not obstinate (that is, before the Bench of Bishops); that his opinions were mere conjectures, proposed as exercises for the powers of reasoning. He attempted (without meaning to be ludicrous) to make his *opinions* a distinct object from his *person*; and, for the good order of the latter, he appealed to the family chaplain, for his attendance at divine service; from whence, however, he always departed at the sermon, insisting that the chaplain could not teach him anything. It was in one of these panics that he produced his "Historical Narrative of Heresy, and the Punishment thereof," where, losing the dignity of the philosophic character, he creeps into a subterfuge with the subtilty of the lawyer; insisting that "The Leviathan," being published at a time when there was no distinction of creeds in England (the Court of High Commission having been abolished in the troubles), that therefore none could be heretical *.

No man was more speculatively bold, and more practically timorous †; and two very contrary principles enabled him, through an extraordinary length of life, to deliver his opinions, and still to save himself: these were, his excessive vanity, and his excessive timidity. The one inspired his hardy originality, and the other prompted him to protect himself by any means. His love of glory roused his vigorous intellect, while his fears shrunk

* It is said that Hobbes completely recanted all his opinions; and proceeded so far, as to declare that the opinions he had published, in his "Leviathan," were not his real sentiments, and that he neither maintained them in public nor in private. Wood gives this title to a work of his: "An Apology for himself and his writings," but without date. Some have suspected that this Apology, if it ever existed, was not his own composition. Yet why not? Hobbes, no doubt, thought that "The Leviathan" would outlast any recantation; and, after all, that a recantation is by no means a refutation! recantations usually prove the force of authority, rather than the force of conviction. I am much pleased with a Dr. Pocklington, who hit the etymology of the word *recantation* with the spirit. Accused and censured, for a penance he was to make a recantation, which he began thus:—"If *canto*, be to sing; *recanto*, is to sing again:" so that he *re-chanted* his offensive principles by his *recantation!*

I suspect that the apology Wood alludes to, was only a republication of Hobbes's Address to the King, prefixed to the "Seven Philosophical Problems, 1662," where he openly disavows his opinions, and makes an apology for the Leviathan. It is curious enough to observe how he acts in this dilemma. It was necessary to give up his opinions to the clergy, but still to prove they were of an innocent nature. He therefore acknowledges that "his theological notions are not his opinions, but propounded with submission to the power ecclesiastical, never afterwards having maintained them in writing or discourse." Yet, to show the king, that the regal power incurred no great risk in them, he laid down one principle, which could not have been unpleasing to Charles II. He asserts, truly, that he never wrote against Episcopacy; "ye he is called an Atheist, or man of no religion, because he has made the authority of the Church depend wholly upon the regal power, which, I hope, your majesty will think is neither Atheism nor Heresy." Hobbes considered the *religion* of his country as a subject of *law*, and not *philosophy*. He was not for *separating* the Church from the State; but, on the contrary, for *joining them* more closely. The bishops ought not to have been his enemies; and many were not.

† In the MS. collection of the French contemporary, who personally knew him, we find a remarkable confession of Hobbes. He said of himself, that "he sometimes made openings to let in light, but that he could not discover his thoughts but by half-views: like those who throw open the window for a short time, but soon closing it, from the dread of the storm."—*Il disoit qu'il faisoit quelquefois des ouvertures, mais qu'il ne pouvoit découvrir ses pensées qu'à-demi; qu'il imitoit ceux qui ouvrent la fenêtre pendant quelques momens, mais qui la referment promptement de peur de l'orage.*"—*Lantiniana MSS.* quoted by Joly in his folio volume of "Remarques sur Bayle."

him into his little self. Hobbes, engaged in the cause of truth, betrayed her dignity by his ambiguous and abject conduct: this was a consequence of his selfish philosophy; and this conduct has yielded no dubious triumph to the noble school which opposed his cynical principles.

A genius more luminous, sagacity more profound, and morals less tainted, were never more eminently combined than in this very man, who was so often reduced to the most abject state. But the antisocial philosophy of Hobbes terminated in preserving a pitiful state of existence. He who considered nothing more valuable than life, degraded himself by the meanest artifices of self-love*, and exulted in the most cynical truths †. The philosophy of Hobbes, founded on fear and suspicion, and which, in human nature, could see nothing beyond himself, might make him a wary politician, but always an imperfect social being. We find, therefore, that the philosopher of Malmesbury adroitly retained a friend at court, to protect him at an extremity; but considering all men alike, as bargaining for themselves, his friends occasioned him as much uneasiness as his enemies. He lived in dread that the Earl of Devonshire, whose roof had ever been his protection, should at length give him up to the Parliament! There are no friendships among cynics!

To such a state of degradation had the selfish philosophy reduced one of the greatest geniuses; a philosophy true only for the wretched and the criminal‡. But those who feel moving within

* Could one imagine that the very head and foot of the stupendous "Leviathan" bears the marks of the little artifices practised for self by its author?—This grave work is dedicated to Francis Godolphin, a person whom its author had never seen, merely to remind him of a certain legacy which that person's brother had left to our philosopher. If read with this fact before us, we may detect the concealed claim to the legacy, which it seems was necessary to conceal from the Parliament, as Francis Godolphin resided in England. It must be confessed, this was a miserable motive for dedicating a system of philosophy which was addressed to all mankind. It discovers little dignity. This secret history we owe to Lord Clarendon, in his "Survey of the Leviathan," who adds another. The postscript to the Leviathan, which is only in the English edition, was designed as an easy summary of the principles: and his lordship adds, as a sly address to Cromwell, that he might be induced to be master of them at once, and "as a pawn of his new subject's allegiance." It is possible that Hobbes might have anticipated the sovereign power which the *general* was on the point of assuming in the *protectorship*. It was natural enough that Hobbes should deny this suggestion.

† The story his antagonist (Dr. Wallis) relates, is perfectly in character. Hobbes, to show the Countess of Devonshire his attachment to life, declared, that "were he master of all the world to dispose of, he would give it to live one day."—"But you have so many friends to oblige, had you the world to dispose of!"—"Shall I be the better for that when I am dead?"—"No (repeated the sublime cynic), I would give the whole world to live one day."—He asserted, that "it was lawful to make use of ill instruments to do ourselves good," and illustrated it thus:—"Were I cast into a deep pit, and the devil should put down his cloven foot, I would take hold of it, to be drawn out by it."—It must be allowed this is a philosophy which has a chance of being long popular; but it is not that of another order of human beings! Hobbes would not, like Curtius, have leaped into "a deep pit" for his country; or, to drop the fable, have died for it in the field or on the scaffold, like the Falklands, the Sidneys, the Montroses—all the heroic brotherhood of genius! One of his last expressions, when informed of the approaches of death, was, "I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of the world at."—Everything was seen in a little way by this great man; who, having reasoned himself into an abject being, "licked the dust" through life.

‡ In our country, Mandeville, Swift, and Chesterfield have trod in the track of Hobbes; and in France, Helvetius, Rochefoucault in his "Maxims," and L'Esprit more openly in his "*Fausseté des Vertus Humaines.*" They only degrade us: they are polished cynics! But what are we to think of the tremendous cynicism of Machiavel? That great genius eyed human nature with the ferocity of an enraged savage. Machiavel is a vindictive assassin, who delights even to turn his dagger within the mortal wound he has struck; but our Hobbes, said his friend Sorbiere, "is a gentle and skilful surgeon, who, with regret, cuts into the living flesh, to get rid of the corrupted." It is equally to be regretted, that the same system of degrading man has been adopted by some, under the mask of religion.

Yet Hobbes, perhaps, never suspected the arms he was placing in the hands of wretched men, when he furnished them with such fundamental positions as, that "Man is naturally an evil being; that he does not love his equal; and only seeks the aid of society for his own particular purposes." He would at least have disowned some of his diabolical disciples. One of them, so late as in 1774, vented his furious philosophy in "An Essay on the Depravity and Corruption of

themselves the benevolent principle, and who delight in acts of social sympathy, are conscious of passions and motives, which the others have omitted in their system. And the truth is, these "unnatural philosophers," as Lord Shaftesbury expressively terms them, are by no means the monsters they tell us they are: their practice is therefore usually in opposition to their principles. While Hobbes was for chaining down mankind as so many beasts of prey, he surely betrayed his social passion, in the benevolent warnings he was perpetually giving them; and while he affected to hold his brothers in contempt, he was sacrificing laborious days, and his peace of mind, to acquire celebrity. Who loved glory more than this sublime Cynic?—"*Glory*," says our philosopher, "by those whom it displeaseth, is called *Pride*; by those whom it pleaseth, it is termed *a just valuation of himself**." Had Hobbes defined, as critically, the passion of *self-love*, without resolving all our sympathies into a single monstrous one, we might have been disciplined without being degraded.

Hobbes, indeed, had a full feeling of the magnitude of his labours, both for foreigners and posterity, as he has expressed it in his life. He disperses, in all his works, some Montaigne-like notices of himself, and they are eulogistic. He has not omitted any one of his virtues, nor even an apology for his deficiency in others. He notices with complacency how Charles II. had his portrait placed in the royal cabinet; how it was frequently asked for by his friends, in England and in France†. He has written his life several times, in verse and in prose; and never fails to throw into the eyes of his adversaries the reputation he gained abroad and

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Human Nature, wherein the Opinions of Hobbes, Mandeville, Helvetius, &c. are supported against Shaftesbury, Hume, Sterne, &c. by Thomas O'Brien M'Mahon." This gentleman, once informed that he was *born wicked*, appears to have considered that wickedness was his paternal estate, to be turned to as profitable an account as he could. The titles of his chapters, serving as a string of the most extraordinary propositions, have been preserved in Monthly Rev. vol. lii. 77. The demonstrations in the work itself must be still more curious. In these axioms we find that "Man has an *enmity* to all beings; that had he *power*, the first victims of his revenge would be his wife, children, &c.—a sovereign, if he could reign with the *unbounded authority* every man *longs for*, free from apprehension of punishment for misrule, would slaughter all his subjects; perhaps he would not leave one of them alive at the end of his reign." It was perfectly in character with this wretched being, after having quarrelled with human nature, that he should be still more inveterate against a small part of her family, with whom he was suffered to live on too intimate terms; for he afterwards published another extraordinary piece,—"The Conduct and Good-Nature of Englishmen exemplified in their charitable way of characterising the Customs, Manners, &c. of neighbouring nations; their equitable and humane mode of governing States, &c.; their elevated and courteous deportment, &c. of which their own authors are everywhere produced as vouchers, 1777." One is tempted to think that this O'Brien M'Mahon, after all, is only a wag, and has copied the horrid pictures of his masters, as Hogarth did the School of Rembrandt, by his "Paul before Felix, designed and *scratched* in the true Dutch taste." These works seem, however, to have their use. To have carried the conclusions of the Anti-social Philosophy to as great lengths as this writer has, is to display their absurdity. But, as every rational Englishman will appeal to his own heart, in declaring the one work to be nothing but a libel on the nation; so every man, not destitute of virtuous emotions, will feel the other to be a libel on human nature itself.

* Human Nature, c. ix.

† Hobbes did not exaggerate the truth. Aubrey says of Cooper's portrait of Hobbes, that "he intends to borrow the picture of his majesty, for Mr. Loggan to engrave an accurate piece by, which will sell well at home and abroad." We have only the rare print of Hobbes by Faithorne, prefixed to a quarto edition of his Latin Life, 1682, remarkable for its expression and character. Sorbiere, returning from England, brought home a portrait of the sage, which he placed in his collection; and strangers, far and near, came to look on the physiognomy of a great and original thinker. One of the honours which men of genius receive is the homage the public pay to their images: either, like the fat monk, one of the heroes of the *Epistolæ obscurorum Virorum*, who, standing before a portrait of Erasmus, spit on it in utter malice; or when they are looked on in silent reverence. It is alike a tribute paid to the masters of intellect. They have had their shrines and pilgrimages.

None of our authors have been better known, nor more highly considered, than our Hobbes, abroad. I find many curious particulars of him and his conversations recorded in French works, which are not known to the English biographers or critics. His residence at Paris occasioned this. See Ancillon's Mélange Critique, Basle, 1698; Patin's Letters, 61; Sorberiana; Niceron, tome iv.; Joly's Additions to Bayle.—All these contain original notices on Hobbes.

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at home*. He delighted to show he was living, by annual publications; and exultingly exclaimed, "That when he had silenced his adversaries, he published, in the eighty-seventh year of his life, the Odyssey of Homer, and the next year the Iliad, in English verse."

His greatest imperfection was a monstrous egotism—the fate of those who concentrate all their observations in their own individual feelings. There are minds which may think too much, by conversing too little with books and men. Hobbes exulted he had read little; he had not more than half-a-dozen books about him; hence he always saw things in his own way, and doubtless this was the cause of his mania for disputation.

He wrote against dogmas with a spirit perfectly dogmatic.' He liked conversation on the terms of his own political system, provided absolute authority was established, peevishly referring to his own works whenever contradicted; and his friends stipulated with strangers, that "they should not dispute with the old man." But what are we to think of that pertinacity of opinion which he held even with one as great as himself? Selden has often quitted the room, or Hobbes been driven from it, in the fierceness of their battle †. Even to his latest day, the "war of words" delighted the man of confined reading. The literary duels between Hobbes and another hero celebrated in Logomachy, the catholic priest, Thomas White, have been recorded by Wood. They had both passed their eightieth year, and were fond of paying visits to one another; but the two literary Nestors never met to part in cool blood, "wrangling, squabbling, and scolding on philosophical matters," as our blunt and lively historian has described ‡.

His little qualities were the errors of his own selfish philosophy; his great ones were those of nature. He was a votary to his studies §: he avoided marriage, to which he was inclined; and refused place and wealth, which he might have enjoyed, for literary leisure. He treated with philosophic pleasantry his real contempt of money ‖.

* To his Life are additions, which nothing but the self-love of the author could have imagined.

"Amicorum Elenchus."—He might be proud of the list of foreigners and natives.

"Tractuum contra Hobbium editorum Syllabus."

"Eorum qui in Scriptis suis Hobbio contradixerunt Indiculus."

"Qui Hobbii meminerunt seu in bonam seu in sequiorem partem."

"In Hobbii Defensionem."—Hobbes died 1679, aged 91. These two editions are, 1681, 1682.

† This fact has been recorded in one of the pamphlets of Richard Baxter, who, however, was no well-wisher to our philosopher. "Additional Notes on the Life and Death of Sir Matthew Hale, 1682," p. 40.

‡ Athen. Oxon., vol. ii., p. 665, ed. 1721. No one, however, knew better than Hobbes the vanity and uselessness of *words:* in one place he compares them to "a spider's web; for, by contexture of words, tender and delicate wits are insnared and stopped, but strong wits break easily through them." The pointed sentence with which Warburton closes his preface to Shakespeare, is Hobbes's—that "words are the counters of the wise, and the money of fools."

§ Aubrey has minutely preserved for us the manner in which Hobbes composed his "Leviathan:" it is very curious for literary students. "He walked much, and contemplated; and he had in the head of his cane a pen and inkhorn, and carried always a note-book in his pocket; and as soon as a thought darted, he presently entered it into his book, or otherwise might have lost it. He had drawn the design of the book into chapters, &c., and he knew whereabouts it would come in. Thus that book was made."—Vol. ii., p. 607. Aubrey, the little Boswell of his day, has recorded another literary particularity, which some authors do not assuredly sufficiently use. Hobbes said, that he sometimes would set his thoughts upon researching and contemplating, always with this proviso: "that he very much and deeply considered one thing at a time—for a week, or sometimes a fortnight."

‖ A small annuity from the Devonshire family, and a small pension from Charles II., exceeded the wants of his philosophic life. If he chose to compute his income, Hobbes says facetiously of himself, in French sols or Spanish maravedis, he could persuade himself that Crœsus or Crassus were by no means richer than himself; and when he alludes to his property, he considers wisdom to be his real wealth:—

"An quàm dives, id est, quàm sapiens fuerim?"

He gave up his patrimonial estate to his brother, not wanting it himself; but he tells the tale himself, and adds, that though small in extent, it was rich in its crops. Anthony Wood, with unusual delight, opens the character of Hobbes: "Though he hath an ill name from some, and good from others, yet he was a person endowed with an excellent philosophical soul, was a contemner of riches, money, envy, the world, &c.; a severe lover of justice, and endowed with great morals; cheerful, open, and free of his discourse, yet without offence to any, which he endeavoured always to avoid." What an enchanting picture of the old man in the

His health and his studies were the sole objects of his thoughts; and notwithstanding that panic which so often disturbed them, he wrote and published beyond his ninetieth year. He closes the metrical history of his life with more dignity than he did his life itself; for his mind seems always to have been greater than his actions. He appeals to his friend for the congruity of his life with his writings; for his devotion to justice; and for a generous work, which no miser could have planned; and closes thus:—

"And now complete my four-and-eighty years,
Life's lengthen'd plot is o'er, and the last scene
appears*."

Of the works of Hobbes we must not conclude, as Hume tells us, that "they have fallen into neglect;" nor, in the style with which they were condemned at Oxford, that "they are pernicious and damnable." The sanguine opinion of the author himself was, that the mighty "Leviathan" will stand for all ages, defended by its own strength; for the rule of justice, the reproof of the ambitious, the citadel of the Sovereign, and the peace of the people †. But the smaller treatises of Hobbes are not less precious. Locke is the pupil of Hobbes, and it may often be doubtful whether the scholar has rivalled the nervous simplicity and the energetic originality of his master.

The genius of Hobbes was of the first order; his works abound with the most impressive truths, in all the simplicity of thought and language, yet he never elevates nor delights. Too faithful an observer of the miserable human nature before him, he submits to expedients; he acts on the defensive; and because he is in terror, he would consider security to be the happiness of man. In *Religion* he would stand by an established one; yet thus he deprives man of that moral freedom which God himself has surely allowed us. Locke has the glory of having first given distinct notions of the nature of toleration. In *Politics* his great principle is the establishment of *Authority*, or, as he terms it, an "entireness of sovereign power:" here he seems to have built his arguments with such eternal truths, and with such a contriving wisdom as to adapt his system to all the changes of government. Hobbes found it necessary, in his day, to place this despotism in the hands of his colossal monarch; and were Hobbes now living, he would not relinquish the principle, though perhaps he might vary the application; for if Authority, strong as man can create it, is not suffered to exist in our free constitution, what will

Our author, so late as in 1750, was still so commanding a genius, that his works were collected in a handsome folio; but that collection is not complete. When he could not get his works printed at home, he published them in Latin, including his mathematical works, at Amsterdam, by Blaew, 1668, 4to. His treatises, "*De Cive*," and "On Human Nature," are of perpetual value. Gassendi recommends these admirable works, and Puffendorff acknowledges the depth of his obligations. The Life of Hobbes in the Biographia Britannica, by Dr. Campbell, is a work of curious research.

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green vigour of his age has Cowley sent down to us!

"Nor can the snow which now cold age does shed
Upon thy reverend head,
Quench or allay the noble fires within;
But all which thou hast been,
And all that youth can be, thou 'rt yet:
So fully still dost thou
Enjoy the manhood and the bloom of wit,
And all the natural heat, but not the fever too.
So contraries on Ætna's top conspire:
Th' embolden'd snow next to the flame does
sleep.—
To things immortal time can do no wrong;
And that which never is to die, for ever must be
young."

* "Ipse meos nôsti, Verdusi candide, mores,
Et tecum cuncti qui mea scripta legunt:
Nam mea vita meis non est incongrua scriptis;
Justitiam doceo, Justitiamque colo.
Improbus esse potest nemo qui non sit avarus,
Nec pulchrum quisquam fecit avarus opus.
Octoginta ego jam complevi et quatuor annos;
Pene acta est vitæ fabula longa meæ."

† Hobbes, in his metrical (by no means his poetical) life, says, the more the Leviathan was written against, the more it was read; and adds,

"Firmiùs inde stetit, spero stabitque per omne
Ævum, defensus viribus ipse suis.
Justitiæ mensura, atque ambitionis elenchus,
Regum arx, pax populo, si doceatur, erit."

The term *arx* is here peculiarly fortunate, according to the system of the author—it means a citadel or fortified place on an eminence, to which the people might fly for their common safety.

His works were much read; as appears by "The Court Burlesqued," a satire attributed to Butler.

"So those who wear the holy robes
That rail so much at *Father Hobbs*,
Because he has exposed of late
The nakedness of Church and State;
Yet tho' they do his books condemn,
They love to buy and read the same."

become of our freedom? Hobbes would now maintain his system by depositing his "entireness of sovereign power" in the Laws of his Country. So easily shifted is the vast political machine of the much abused Leviathan! The *Citizen* of Hobbes, like the *Prince* of Machiavel, is alike innocent, when the end of their authors is once detected, amid those ambiguous means by which the hard necessity of their times constrained their mighty genius to disguise itself.

It is, however, remarkable of *Systems of Opinions*, that the founder's celebrity has usually outlived his sect's. Why are systems, when once brought into practice, so often discovered to be fallacies? It seems to me the natural progress of system-making. A genius of this order of invention, long busied with profound observations and perpetual truths, would appropriate to himself this assemblage of his ideas, by stamping his individual mark on them; for this purpose he strikes out some mighty paradox, which gives an apparent connexion to them all; and to this paradox he forces all parts into subserviency. It is a minion of the fancy, which his secret pride supports, not always by the most scrupulous means. Hence the system itself, with all its novelty and singularity, turns out to be nothing more than an ingenious deception carried on for the glory of the inventor; and when his followers perceive they were the dupes of his ingenuity, they are apt, in quitting the system, to give up all; not aware that the parts are as true as the whole together is false; the sagacity of Genius collected the one, but its Vanity formed the other!

HOBBES'S QUARRELS

WITH

DR. WALLIS THE MATHEMATICIAN.

Hobbes's passion for the study of Mathematics began late in life—attempts to be an original discoverer—attacked by Wallis—various replies and rejoinders—nearly maddened by the opposition he encountered—after four years of truce, the war again renewed—character of Hobbes by Dr. Wallis, a specimen of invective and irony; serving as a remarkable instance how the greatest genius may come down to us disguised by the arts of an adversary—Hobbes's noble defence of himself; of his own great reputation; of his politics; and of his religion—a literary stratagem of his—reluctantly gives up the contest, which lasted twenty years.

The Mathematical War between Hobbes and the celebrated Dr. Wallis is now to be opened. A series of battles, the renewed campaigns of more than twenty years, can be described by no term less eventful. Hobbes himself considered it as a war, and it was a war of idle ambition, in which he took too much delight. His "Amata Mathemata" became his pride, his pleasure, and at length his shame. He attempted to maintain his irruption into a province he ought never to have entered in defiance, by "a new method;" but having invaded the powerful natives, he seems to have almost repented the folly, and retires, leaving "the unmanageable brutes" to themselves:

Ergo meam statuo non ultra perdere opellam
Indocile expectans discere posse pecus.

His language breathes war, while he sounds his retreat, and confesses his repulse. The Algebraists had all declared against the Invader.

Wallisius contra pugnat; victusque videbar
Algebristarum Theiologumque scholis,
Et simul eductus Castris exercitus omnis
Pugnæ securus Wallisianus ovat.

And,

Pugna placet vertor—
Bella mea audisti—&c.

So that we have sufficient authority to consider this Literary Quarrel as a war, and a "Bellum Peloponnesiacum" too, for it lasted as long. Political, literary, and even personal feelings, were called in, to heat the temperate blood of two Mathematicians.

"What means this tumult in a Vestal's veins?"

Hobbes was one of the many victims who lost themselves in squaring the circle, and doubling the cube. He applied, late in life, to mathematical studies, not so much, he says, to learn the subtile demonstrations of its figures, as to acquire those habits of close reasoning, so useful in the discovery of new truths, to prove or to refute. So justly he reasoned on mathematics; but so ill he practised the science, that it made him the most unreasonable being imaginable, for he resisted mathematical demonstration itself *!

* The origin of his taste for mathematics was purely accidental: begun in love, it continued to dotage. According to Aubrey, he was forty years old when, "being in a gentleman's library, Euclid's Elements lay open at the 47th Propos. lib. i. which, having read, he swore, 'This is impossible!' He read the demonstration, which referred him back to another—at length he was convinced of that truth. This made him in love with geometry. I have heard Mr. Hobbes say, that he was wont to draw lines on his thighs, and on the sheets a-bed."

His great and original character could not but prevail in everything he undertook; and his egotism tempted him to raise a name in the world of Science, as he had in that of Politics and Morals. With the ardour of a young mathematician, he exclaimed, *Eureka!* "I have found it."—The quadrature of the circle was indeed the common Dulcinea of the Quixotes of the time; but they had all been disenchanted. Hobbes alone clung to his ridiculous mistress. Repeatedly confuted, he was perpetually resisting old reasonings, and producing new ones. Were only genius requisite for an able mathematician, Hobbes had been among the first; but patience and docility, not fire and fancy, are necessary. His reasonings were all paralogisms, and he had always much to say, from not understanding the subject of his inquiries.

When Hobbes published his "De Corpore Philosophico," 1655, he there exulted that he had solved the great mystery. Dr. Wallis, the Savilian professor of mathematics at Oxford*, with a deep aversion to Hobbes's political and religious sentiments, as he understood them, rejoiced to see this famous combatant descending into his own arena. He certainly was eager to meet him single-handed; for he instantly confuted Hobbes, by his "Elenchus Geometriæ Hobbianæ." Hobbes, who saw the newly-acquired province of his mathematics in danger, and which, like every new possession, seemed to involve his honour more than was necessary, called on all the world to be witnesses of the mighty conflict. He now published his work in English, with a sarcastic addition, in a magisterial tone, of "*Six Lessons to the Professors of Mathematics in Oxford.*" These were Seth Ward† and Wallis, both no friends to Hobbes, and who hungered after him as a relishing morsel. Wallis now replied in English, by "Due Correction for Mr. Hobbes, or School-discipline for not saying his Lessons right, 1656." That part of controversy, which is usually the last, had already taken place in their choice of phrases‡.

In the following year the campaign was opened by Hobbes with "ΣΤΙΓΜΑΙ; or, *marks* of the absurd Geometry, *rural Language*, Scottish Church-politics, and Barbarisms, of John Wallis." Quick was the routing of these fresh forces; not one was to escape alive! for Wallis now took the

* The author of the excellent Latin grammar of the English language, so useful to every student in Europe, of which work that singular patriot, Thomas Hollis, printed an edition, to present to all the learned Institutions of Europe. Henry Stubbe, the celebrated physician of Warwick, to whom the reader has been introduced, joined, for he loved a quarrel, in the present controversy, when it involved philosophical matters, siding with Hobbes, because he hated Wallis. In his "Oneirocritica, or an Exact Account of the Grammatical parts of this Controversy," he draws a strong character of Wallis, who was indeed a great mathematician, and one of the most extraordinary decypherers of letters; for perhaps no new system of character could be invented, for which he could not make a key; by which means he had rendered the most important services to the Parliament. Stubbe quaintly describes him, as "the sub-scribe to the tribe of Adoniram" (*i. e.* Adoniram Byfield, who, with this cant name, was scribe to the fanatical Assembly of Divines), and "as the glory and pride of the Presbyterian faction."

† Dr. Seth Ward, after the Restoration made Bishop of Salisbury, said, some years before this event was expected, that "he had rather be the author of one of Hobbes's books, than be king of England." But afterwards he seemed not a little inclined to cry out *Crucifige!* He who, to one of these books, the admirable treatise on "Human Nature," had prefixed one of the highest panegyrics Hobbes could receive!—*Athen. Oxon.* vol. ii., p. 647.

‡ It is mortifying to read *such language* between two mathematicians, in the calm inquiries of square roots, and the finding of mean proportionals between two straight lines. I wish the example may prove a warning. Wallis thus opens on Hobbes:—"It seems, Mr. Hobbes, that you have a mind to *say your lesson*, and that the mathematic professors of Oxford should *hear* you. You are too old to learn, though you have as much need as those that be younger, and yet will think much to be whipped.

"What moved you to say your lessons in English, when the books against which you do chiefly intend them were written in Latin? Was it chiefly for the perfecting your natural rhetoric, whenever you thought it convenient to repair to Billingsgate?—You found that the oyster-women could not teach you to rail in Latin. Now you can, upon all occasion, or without occasion, give the titles of *fool, beast, ass, dog*, &c., which I take to be but barking; and they are no better than a man might have at Billingsgate for a box o' the ear.

"You tell us, 'though the beasts, that think our railing to be roaring, have for a time admired us; yet now you have showed them our ears, they will be less affrighted.' Sir, those persons (the professors themselves) needed not the sight of *your ears*, but could tell by the *voice* what kind of creature *brayed* in your books: you dared not have said this to their faces."—He bitterly says of Hobbes, that "he is a man who is always writing what was answered before he had written."

field with "Hobbiani Puncti dispunctio! or, the undoing of Mr. Hobbes's Points; in answer to Mr. Hobbes's ΣΤΙΓΜΑΙ, *id est*, Stigmata Hobbii."—Hobbes seems now to have been reduced to great straits; perhaps he wondered at the obstinacy of his adversary. It seems that Hobbes, who had been used to other studies, and who confesses all the algebraists were against him, could not conceive a point to exist without quantity; or a line could be drawn without latitude; or a superficies be without depth or thickness; but mathematicians conceive them without these qualities, when they exist abstractedly in the mind; though, when for the purposes of science they are produced to the senses, they necessarily have all the qualities. It was understanding these figures, in the vulgar way, which led Hobbes into a labyrinth of confusions and absurdities *. They appear to have nearly maddened the clear and vigorous intellect of our philosopher; for he exclaims, in one of these writings:—

"I alone am mad, or they are all out of their senses: so that no third opinion can be taken, unless any will say that we are all mad."

Four years of truce were allowed to intervene between the next battle; when the irrefutable Hobbes, once more collecting his weak and his incoherent forces, arranged them, as well as he was able, into "Six Dialogues, 1661." The utter annihilation he intended for his antagonist, fell on himself. Wallis, borrowing the character of "The Self-tormentor," from Terence, produced "Hobbius Heauton-timorumenos (Hobbes the Self-tormentor); or, a Consideration of Mr. Hobbes's Dialogues; addressed to Robert Boyle, 1662."

This attack of Wallis is of a very opposite character to the arid discussion of abstract blunders in geometry. He who began with points, and doubling the cube, and squaring the circle, now assumes a loftier tone, and carrying his personal and moral feelings into a mere controversy between two idle mathematicians, he has formed a solemn invective, and edged it with irony. I hope the reader has experienced sufficient interest in the character of Hobbes to read the long, but curious extract I shall now transcribe, with that awe and reverence which the old man claims. It will show how even the greatest genius may be disguised, when viewed through the coloured medium of an adversary. One is, however, surprised to find such a passage in a mathematical work.

"He doth much improve; I mean he doth, *proficere in pejus;* more, indeed, than I could reasonably have expected he would have done;—insomuch, that I cannot but profess some relenting thoughts (though I had formerly occasion to use him somewhat coarsely), to see an old man thus fret and torment himself to no purpose. You, too, should pity your antagonist; not as if he did deserve it, but because he needs it; and as Chremes, in Terence, of his Senex, his self-tormenting Menedemus—

> Cum videam miserum hunc tam excruciarier
> Miseret me ejus. Quod potero adjutabo senem.

"Consider the temper of the man, to move your pity; a person *extremely passionate and peevish, and wholly impatient of contradiction.* A temper, which, whether it be a greater fault or torment (to one, who must so often meet with what he is so ill able to bear) is hard to say.

"And to this fretful humour you must add another as bad, which feeds it. You are therefore next to consider him as *one highly opinionative and magisterial. Fanciful* in his conceptions, and deeply enamoured with those *phantasmes*, without a rival. He doth not spare to profess, upon all occasions, how incomparably he thinks himself to have *surpassed all*, ancient, modern, schools, academies, persons, societies, philosophers, divines, heathens, Christians; how despicable he thinks all their writings, in comparison of his; and what hopes he hath, that, by *the sovereign command of some absolute prince, all other doctrines being exploded, his new dictates should be peremptorily imposed, to be alone taught in all schools and pulpits, and universally submitted to.* To recount all which he speaks of himself *magnificently*, and *contemptuously* of others, would fill a volume. Should some idle person read over all his books, and collecting together his arrogant and supercilious speeches, applauding himself, and despising all other men, set them forth in one *synopsis*, with this title, *Hobbius de se*—what a pretty piece of pageantry this would make!

"The admirable sweetness of your own nature has not given you the experience of such a temper: yet your contemplation must have needs discerned it, in those symptoms which you have seen it work in others, like the strange effervescence, ebullition, fumes, and fetors, which you have sometimes given yourself the content to observe, in some active *acrimonious* chymical *spirits* upon the injection of some contrariant *salts* strangely vexing, fretting, and tormenting itself, while it doth but administer *sport* to the unconcerned spectator. Which temper, being so eminent in the person we have to deal with, your generous nature, which cannot but pity affliction, how much soever deserved, must needs have some compassion for him: who, besides

* Dr. Campbell's art. on Hobbes, in Biog. Brit. p. 2619.

those exquisite *torments* wherewith he doth afflict himself, like that

—— quo Siculi non invenere Tyranni
Tormentum majus—

is unavoidably exposed to those two great *mischiefs*; an incapacity to be *taught what he doth not know*, or to be *advised when he thinks amiss*; and moreover, to this *inconvenience*, that he must never *hear his faults but from his adversaries*; for those who are willing to be reputed *friends*, must either not advertise what they see amiss, or incommode themselves.

"But, you will ask, what need he thus torment himself? What need of pity? If *he have hopes* to be admitted the *sole dictator in philosophy*, civil and natural, in schools and pulpits, and to be owned as the only *magister sententiarum*, what would he have more?

"True, *if he have*; but what *if he have not*? That he *had* some hopes of such an honour, he hath not been sparing to let us know, and was providing against the *envy* that might attend it (*nec deprecabor invidiam, sed augendo, ulcisear*, was his resolution); but I doubt these hopes are at an end. He did not find (as he expected) that the *fairies and hobgoblins* (for such he reputes all that went before him) did vanish presently, upon the first appearance of his *sunshine*: and, which is worse, while he was on the one side guarding himself against *Envy*, he is, on the other side, unhappily *surprised* by a worse enemy, called *Contempt*, and with which he is less able to grapple.

"I forbear to mention (lest I might seem to reproach that age which I reverence) the *disadvantages* which he may sustain by his old age. 'Tis possible that time and age, in a person somewhat *morose*, may have rivetted faster that preconceived opinion of his own worth and excellency beyond others. 'Tis possible, also, that he may have *forgotten* much of what once he knew. He may, perhaps, be sometimes more *secure* than *safe*; while trusting to what he thinks a firm foundation, his footing fails him; nor always so vigilant or quicksighted as to discern the *incoherence* or *inconsequence* of his own discourses; unwilling, notwithstanding, to make use of the eyes of other men, lest he should seem thereby to disparage his own; but certainly (though his *will* may be as good as ever) his *parts* are less vegete and nimble, as to *invention* at least, than in his younger days.

"While he had endeavoured only to *raise an expectation*, or put the world in hopes of what great things he had in hand (*to render all philosophy as clear and certain as Euclid's Elements*), if he had then *died*, it might, perhaps, have been thought by some, that the world had been deprived of *a great philosopher*, and learning sustained an invaluable loss, by the abortion of *so desired a piece*. But since that *Partus Montis* is come to light, and found to be no more than what little animals have brought forth, and that, *deformed* enough and *unamiable*, he might have sooner gone off the stage with more advantage than now he is like to do; such is the misfortune for a man to *outlive his reputation!*

"By this time, perhaps, you may see cause to *pity* him while you see him *falling*. But if you consider him *tumbling headlong* from so great a height, 'twill make some addition to that *compassion* which doth already begin to work. You are therefore next to consider, that when, upon the account of *geometry*, he was unsafely mounted to that height of vanity, he did unhappily fall into the hands of two mathematicians, who have used him so unmercifully, as would have put a person of *greater patience* into *passion*, and meeting with such a *temper*, have so discomposed him that he hath ever since *talked idly*: and to augment the grief, these mathematicians were both Divines—he had rather have fallen by any other hand. These *mathematical divines* (a term which he had thought incomponible) began to unravel the wrong end; and while he thought they should have first *untiled the roof*, and by degrees gone downward, they strike at the *foundation*, and make the building tumble all at once; and that in such confusion, that by dashing one part against another, they make each help to destroy the whole. They first fall upon his *last reserve*, and rout his *mathematics* beyond a possibility of *rallying*; and by *firing his magazine* upon the first assault, make his own weapons *fight against him*. Not contented herewith, they enter the *breach*, and pursue the *rout* through his Logics, Physics, Metaphysics, Theology, where they find all in confusion—"

This invective and irony from this celebrated mathematician, so much out of the path of his habitual studies, might have proved a tremendous blow; but the genius of Hobbes was invulnerable to mere human opposition, unless accompanied by the supernatural terrors of penal fires or perpetual dungeons. Our hero received the whole discharge of this battering train, and stood immovable while he returned the fire in

"Considerations upon the Reputation, Loyalty, Manners, and Religion, of Thomas Hobbes, of Malmesbury, written by way of Letter to a learned person, Dr. Wallis, 1662."

It is an extraordinary production. His lofty indignation retorts on the feeble irony of his antagonist with keen and caustic accusations; and the green strength of youth was still seen i

the old man whose head was covered with snows.

From this spirited apology for himself, I shall give some passages. Hobbes thus replied to Dr. Wallis, who affected to consider the old man as a fit object for commiseration.

"You would make him contemptible, and move Mr. Boyle to pity him. This is a way of railing too much beaten to be thought witty: besides, 'tis no argument of your contempt to spend upon him so many angry lines, as would have furnished you with a dozen of sermons. If you had in good earnest despised him, you would have let him alone, as he does Dr. Ward, Mr. Baxter, Pike, and others, that have reviled him as you do. As for his reputation beyond the seas, it fades not yet; and because perhaps you have no means to know it, I will cite you a passage of an epistle written by a learned Frenchman to an eminent person in France, in a volume of epistles."

Hobbes quotes the passage at length, in which his name appears joined with Galileo, Descartes, Bacon, and Gassendi.

In reply to Wallis' sarcastic suggestion, that an idle person should collect together Hobbes's arrogant and supercilious speeches applauding himself, under one title, *Hobbius de se*, he says,—

"Let your idle person do it; Mr. Hobbes shall acknowledge them under his hand, and be commended for it, and you scorned. A certain Roman senator having propounded something in the assembly of the people, which they, misliking, made a noise at, boldly bad them hold their peace, and told them he knew better what was good for the commonwealth than all they; and his words are transmitted to us as an argument of his virtue; *so much do truth and vanity alter the complexion of self-praise.* You can have very little skill in morality, that cannot see the justice of commending a man's self, as well as of anything else, in his own defence; and it was want of prudence in you to constrain him to a thing that would so much displease you.

"When you make his *age* a reproach to him, and show no cause that might impair the faculties of his mind, but only age, I admire how you saw not that you reproached all old men in the world as much as him, and warranted all young men, at a certain time which they themselves shall define, to call you *fool!* Your dislike of old age you have also otherwise sufficiently signified, in venturing so fairly as you have done to escape it. But that is no great matter to one that hath so many marks upon him of much greater reproaches. By Mr. Hobbes's calculation, that derives prudence from experience, and experience from age, you are a very young man; but, by your own reckoning, you are older already than Methuselah."

"During the late trouble, who made both Oliver and the people mad but the preachers of your principles? But besides the wickedness, see the folly of it. You thought to make them mad, but just to such a degree as should serve your own turn; that is to say, mad, and yet just as wise as yourselves. Were you not very imprudent to think to govern madness?"—P. 15.

"The king was hunted as a partridge in the mountains, and though the hounds have been hanged, yet the hunters were as guilty as they, and deserved no less punishment. And the decypherers (Wallis had decyphered the royal letters) and all that blew the horn, are to be reckoned among the hunters. Perhaps you would not have had the prey killed, but rather have kept it tame. And yet who can tell? I have read of few kings deprived of their power by their own subjects that have lived any long time after it, for reasons that every man is able to conjecture."

He closes with a very odd image of the most cynical contempt:—

"Mr. Hobbes has been always far from provoking any man, though, when he is provoked, you find his pen as sharp as yours. All you have said is error and railing; that is, *stinking wind*, such as a jade lets fly when he is too hard girt upon a full belly. I have done. I have considered you now, but will not again, whatsoever preferment any of your friends shall procure you."

These were the pitched battles; but many skirmishes occasionally took place. Hobbes was even driven to a *ruse de guerre*. When he found his mathematical character in the utmost peril, there appeared a pamphlet, entitled,—

"Lux Mathematica, &c., or, Mathematical Light struck out from the clashings between Dr. John Wallis, Professor of Geometry in the celebrated University of Oxford (celeberrima Academia), and Thomas Hobbes, of Malmesbury; augmented with many and shining rays of the Author, R. R. 1672."

Here the victories of Hobbes are trumpeted forth; but the fact is, that R. R. should have been T. H. It was Hobbes's own composition! R. R. stood for *Roseti Repertor*, that is, the Finder of the Rosary, one of the titles of Hobbes's mathematical discoveries. Wallis asserts, that this R. R. may still serve; for it may answer his own book, *Roseti Refutator*, or, the Refuter of the Rosary.

Poor Hobbes gave up the contest reluctantly; if, indeed, the controversy may not be said to have lasted all his life. He acknowledges he was writing to no purpose; and that the medicine was obliged to yield to the disease.

"Sed nil profeci, magnis authoribus Error
Fultus erat, cessit sic Medicina malo."

He seems to have gone down to the grave, in spite of all the reasonings of the geometricians on this side of it, with a firm conviction, that its superficies had both depth and thickness*. Such were the fruits of a great genius, entering into a province out of his own territories; and, though a most energetic reasoner, so little skilful in these new studies, that he could never know when he was confuted and refuted†.

* The strange conclusions some mathematicians have deduced from their principles concerning the *real quantity of matter*, and the *reality of space*, have been noticed by Pope, in the Dunciad:—

"Mad *Máthesis* alone was unconfined,
Too mad for mere material chains to bind:
Now to *pure space* lifts her ecstatic stare;
Now running round *the circle*, finds its *square*."

Dunciad, book iv., ver. 31.

† When all animosities had ceased, after the death of Hobbes, I find Dr. Wallis, in a very temperate letter to Tenison, exposing the errors of Hobbes in mathematical studies; Wallis acknowledges that philology had never entered into his pursuits,—in this he had never designed to oppose his superior genius; but it was Hobbes who had too often turned his mathematical into a philological controversy. Wallis has made a just observation on the nature of mathematical truths:—"Hobbes's argumentations are destructive in one part of what is said in another. This is more convincingly evident, and more unpardonable, in mathematics than in other discourses, which are things capable of cogent demonstration, and so evident, that though a good mathematician may be subject to commit an error, yet one who understands but little of it, cannot but see a fault when it is showed him."

Wallis was an eminent genius in scientific pursuits. His art of decyphering letters was carried to amazing perfection; and among other phenomena he discovered, was that of teaching a young man, born deaf and dumb, to speak plainly. He humorously observes, in one of his letters:—"I am now employed upon another work, as hard almost as to make Mr. Hobbes understand mathematics. It is, to teach a person dumb and deaf to speak, and to understand a language."

JONSON AND DECKER.

BEN JONSON appears to have carried his military spirit into the literary republic—his gross convivialities, with anecdotes of the prevalent taste, in that age, for drinking-bouts—his "Poetaster" a sort of Dunciad, besides a personal attack on the frequenters of the theatres, with anecdotes—his Apologetical Dialogue, which was not allowed to be repeated—characters of DECKER and of MARSTON—DECKER's Satiromastix, a parody on JONSON's Poetaster—BEN exhibited under the character of "Horace Junior"—specimens of that literary satire; its dignified remonstrance, and the honourable applause bestowed on the great bard—some foibles in the literary habits of BEN, alluded to by DECKER—JONSON's noble reply to his detractors and rivals.

THIS quarrel is a splendid instance how genius of the first order, lavishing its satirical powers on a number of contemporaries, may discover, among the crowd, some individual who may return with a right aim the weapon he has himself used, and who will not want for encouragement to attack the common assailant: the greater genius is thus mortified by a victory conceded to the inferior, which he himself had taught the meaner one to obtain over him.

JONSON, in his earliest productions, "Every Man in his Humour" and "Every Man out of his Humour," usurped that dictatorship, in the Literary Republic, which he so sturdily and invariably maintained, though long and hardily disputed. No bard has more courageously foretold, that posterity would be interested in his labours; and often with very dignified feelings, he casts this declaration into the teeth of his adversaries: but a bitter contempt for his brothers and his contemporaries was not less vehement, than his affections for those who crowded under his wing. To his "sons" and his admirers he was warmly attached; and no poet has left behind him, in MS., so many testimonies of personal fondness, in the inscriptions and addresses, in the copies of his works, which he presented to friends: of these, I have seen more than one, fervent and impressive.

DRUMMOND of Hawthornden, who perhaps carelessly and imperfectly minuted down the heads of their literary conference on the chief authors of the age, exposes the severity of criticism which Ben exercised on some spirits as noble as his own. The genius of Jonson was rough, hardy, and invincible, of which the frequent excess degenerated into ferocity; and by some traditional tales, this ferocity was still inflamed by large potations: for Drummond informs us, "Drink was the element in which he lived*." Old Ben had given,

* The gross convivialities of the times, from the age of Elizabeth, were remarkable for several circumstances. Hard-drinking was a foreign vice, imported by our military men on their return from the Netherlands: and the practice, of whose prevalence Camden complains, was even brought to a kind of science. They had a dialect peculiar to their orgies. See Curiosities of Literature, p. 278, 11th edition.

Jonson's inclinations were too well suited to the prevalent taste, and he gave as largely into it as any of his contemporaries. Tavern-habits were then those of our poets and actors. Ben's "Humours," at "the Mermaid," and at a later period, his "Leges Convivales" at "the Apollo," the club-room of "the Devil," were doubtless one great cause of a small personal unhappiness, of which he complains, and which had a very unlucky effect, in rendering a mistress so obdurate, who "through her eyes had stopt her ears." This was, as his own verse tells us,

"His mountain-belly and his rocky face."

He weighed near twenty stone, according to his own avowal—an Elephant-Cupid! One of his "Sons," at the "Devil," seems to think that his "Catiline" could not fail to be a miracle, by a certain sort of inspiration which Ben used on the occasion.

on two occasions, some remarkable proofs of his personal intrepidity. When a soldier, in the face of both armies, he had fought single-handed with his antagonist, had slain him, and carried off his arms as trophies. Another time he killed his man in a duel. Jonson appears to have carried the same military spirit into the Literary Republic.

Such a genius would become more tyrannical by success, and naturally provoked opposition, from the proneness of mankind to mortify usurped greatness, when they can securely do it. The man who hissed the poet's play, had no idea that he might himself become one of the dramatic personages. Ben then produced his "Poetaster," which has been called the Dunciad of those times; but it is a Dunciad without notes. The personages themselves are now only known by their general resemblance to nature; with the exception of two characters, those of *Crispinus and Demetrius**.

"With strenuous sinewy words that Catiline swells,
I reckon it not among men-miracles.
How could that poem heat and vigour lack,
When each line oft cost BEN *a cup of sack?*"

R. BARON'S *Pocula Castalia*, p. 113, 1650.

Jonson, in the Bacchic phraseology of the day, was "a Canary-bird." "He would (says Aubrey) many times exceed in drink; Canary was his beloved liquor; then he would tumble home to bed; and, when he had thoroughly perspired, then to study."

Tradition, too, has sent down to us several tavern-tales of "Rare Ben." A good-humoured one has been preserved of the first interview between Bishop Corbet, when a young man, and our great bard. It occurred at a tavern, where Corbet was sitting alone. Ben, who had probably just drank up to the pitch of good fellowship, desired the waiter to take to the gentleman "a quart of *raw* wine; and tell him," he added, "I *sacrifice* my service to him."—"Friend," replied Corbet, "I thank him for his love; but tell him, from me, that he is mistaken; for *sacrifices are always burned.*"—This pleasant allusion to the mulled wine of the time, by the young wit, could not fail to win the affection of the master-wit himself. Harl. MSS. 6395.

Ben is not viewed so advantageously, in an unlucky fit of ebriety recorded by Oldys, in his MS. Notes on Langbaine; but his authority is not to me of a suspicious nature: he had drawn it from a MS. collection of Oldisworth's, who appears to have been a curious collector of the history of his times. He was secretary to that strange character, Philip, Earl of Pembroke. It was the custom of those times to form collections of little traditional stories and other good things; we have had lately given to us by the Camden Society, an amusing one, from the L'Estrange family, and the MS. already quoted is one of them. There could be no bad motive in recording a tale, quite innocent in itself; and which is further confirmed by Isaac Walton, who, without alluding to the tale, notices that Jonson parted from Sir Walter Raleigh and his son "not in cold blood." Mr. Gifford, in a MS. note on this work, does not credit this story, it not being accordant with dates. Such stories may not accord with dates or persons, and yet may be founded on some substantial fact. I know of no injury to Ben's poetical character, in showing that he was, like other men, quite incapable of taking care of himself, when he was sunk in the heavy sleep of drunkenness. It was an age when kings, as our James I. and his majesty of Denmark, were as often laid under the table as their subjects. My motive for preserving the story is the incident respecting *carrying men in baskets*: it was evidently a custom, which perhaps may have suggested the memorable adventure of Falstaff. It was a convenient mode of conveyance for those who were incapable of taking care of themselves before the invention of hackney coaches, which was of later date, in Charles the First's reign.

Camden recommended Jonson to Sir Walter Raleigh, as a tutor to his son, whose gay humours not brooking the severe studies of Jonson, took advantage of his foible, to degrade him in the eyes of his father, who, it seems, was remarkable for his abstinence from wine: though, if another tale be true, he was no common sinner in "the true Virginia." Young Raleigh contrived to give Ben a surfeit, which threw the poet into a deep slumber; and then the pupil maliciously procured a buck-basket, and a couple of men, who carried our Ben to Sir Walter, with a message, that "their young master had sent home his tutor." There is nothing improbable in the story; for the circumstance of *carrying drunken men in baskets* was a usual practice. In the Harleian MS. quoted above, I find more than one instance; I will give one. An alderman, carried in *a porter's basket*, at his own door, is thrown out of it in a *qualmish* state. The man, to frighten away the passengers, and enable the grave citizen to creep in unobserved, exclaims, That the man had *the falling sickness!*

* These were Marston and Decker, but as is usual with these sort of caricatures, the originals sometimes mistook their likenesses. They were both town-wits, and cronies, of much the same stamp; by a careful perusal of their works, the editor of Jonson has decided that Marston was

In "The Poetaster," Ben, with flames too long smothered, burst over the heads of all rivals and detractors. His enemies seem to have been among all classes; personages recognised on the scene as soon as viewed; poetical, military, legal, and histrionic. It raised a host in arms.—Jonson wrote an apologetical epilogue, breathing a firm spirit, worthy of himself: but its dignity was too haughty to be endured by contemporaries, whom genius must soothe by equality. This apologetical dialogue was never allowed to be repeated; now we may do it with pleasure. Writings, like pictures, require a particular light, and distance, to be correctly judged and inspected, without any personal inconvenience.

One of the dramatic personages in this epilogue inquires:

"I never saw the play breed all this tumult.
What was there in it could so deeply offend,
And stir so many hornets?"

The author replies:

——————"I never writ that piece
More innocent, or empty of offence;
Some salt it had, but neither tooth nor gall.
—————— "Why, they say you tax'd
The law and lawyers, captains, and the players,
By their particular names.
—————— "It is not so:
I used no names. My books have still been taught
To spare the persons, and to speak the vices."

And he proceeds to tell us, that to obviate this accusation, he had placed his scenes in the age of Augustus.

"To show that Virgil, Horace, and the rest
Of those great master-spirits, did not want
Detractors then, or practisers against them:
And by this line, although no parallel,
I hoped at last they would sit down and blush."

But instead of their "sitting down and blushing," we find

"That they fly buzzing round about my nostrils;
And, like so many screaming grasshoppers
Held by the wings, fill every ear with noise."

Names were certainly not necessary to portraits, where every day the originals were standing by

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Crispinus. With him Jonson had once lived on the most friendly terms: afterwards, the great poet quarrelled with both, or they with him.

Dryden, in the preface to his "Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco," in his quarrel with Settle, which has been sufficiently narrated by Dr. Johnson, felt, when poised against this miserable rival, who had been merely set up by a party, to mortify the superior genius, as Jonson had felt when pitched against *Crispinus*. It is thus that literary history is so interesting to authors.—How often, in recording the fates of others, it reflects their own! "I knew indeed (says Dryden) that to write against him was to do him too great an honour; but I considered Ben Jonson had done it before to Decker, our author's predecessor, whom he chastised in his Poetaster, under the character of *Crispinus*." Langbaine tells us, the subject of the *Satiromastix* of Decker, which I am to notice, was "the witty Ben Jonson;" and with this agree all the notices I have hitherto met with, respecting "the Horace Junior" of Decker's Satiromastix. Mr. Gilchrist has published two curious pamphlets on Jonson; and in the last, p. 56, he has shown that Decker was "the poet-ape of Jonson," and that he avenged himself under the character of *Crispinus*, in his Satiromastix: to which may be added, that the *Fannius*, in the same satirical comedy, is probably his friend Marston.

Jonson allowed himself great liberty in *personal satire*, by which, doubtless, he rung an alarum to a waspish host; he lampooned *Inigo Jones*, the great machinist and architect. The lampoons are printed in Jonson's works; and I have in MS. an answer by Inigo Jones in verse, so pitiful that I have not printed it. That he condescended to bring obscure individuals on the stage, appears, by his character of *Carlo Buffoon*, in "Every Man out of his Humour." He calls this "a second untruss," and was censured for having drawn it from personal revenge. The Aubrey papers, recently published, have given us the character of this *Carlo Buffoon*, "one Charles Chester, a bold impertinent fellow; and they could never be at quiet for him; a perpetual talker, and made a noise like a drum in a room. So one time, at a tavern, Sir Walter Raleigh beats him, and seals up his mouth; *i. e.* his upper and nether beard, with hard wax." P. 514. Such a character was no unfitting object for dramatic satire. Mr. Gilchrist's pamphlets defended Jonson from the frequent accusations raised against him for the freedom of his muse, in such portraits after the life. Yet even our poet himself does not deny their truth, while he excuses himself. In the dedication of "The Fox" to the two Universities, he boldly asks, "Where have I been particular? Where personal?—Except to a mimic, cheater, bawd, buffoon, creatures (for their insolencies) worthy to be taxed." The mere list he here furnishes us with, would serve to crowd one of the "twopenny audiences" in the small theatres of that day.

their side. This is the studied pleading of a poet, who knows he is concealing the truth.

There is a passage in the play itself, where Jonson gives the true cause of "the tumult" raised against him. Picturing himself under the character of his favourite Horace, he makes the enemies of Horace thus describe him, still, however, preserving the high tone of poetical superiority.

"Alas, sir, Horace is a mere sponge. Nothing but humours and observations he goes up and down sucking from every society, and when he comes home squeezes himself dry again. He will pen all he knows. He will sooner lose his best friend, than his least jest. What he once drops upon paper against a man, lives eternally to upbraid him."

Such is the true picture of a town-wit's life! The age of Augustus was much less present to Jonson than his own; and Ovid, Tibullus, and Horace, were not the personages he cared so much about, as "that society in which," it was said, "he went up and down sucking in and squeezing himself dry:" the formal lawyers, who were cold to his genius; the sharking captains, who would not draw to save their own swords, and would cheat "their friend, or their friend's friend," while they would bully down Ben's genius; and the little sycophant histrionic, "the twopenny * tear-mouth, copper-laced scoundrel, stiff-toe, who used to travel with pumps full of gravel after a blind jade and a hamper, and stalk upon boards and barrel-heads to an old crackt trumpet;" and who all now made a party with some rival of Jonson.

All these personages will account for "the tumult" which excites the innocent astonishment of our author. These only resisted him by "filling every ear with noise." But one of the "screaming grasshoppers held by the wings," boldly turned on the holder with a scorpion's bite; and Decker, who had been lashed in the Poetaster, produced his "Satiromastix, or the untrussing of the humorous Poet." Decker was a subordinate author, indeed; but, what must have been very galling to Jonson, who was the aggressor, indignation proved such an inspirer, that Decker seemed to have caught some portion of Jonson's own genius, who had the art of making even Decker popular; while he discovered that his own laurel-wreath had been dextrously changed by the "Satiromastix" into a garland of "stinging nettles."

In "The Poetaster," *Crispinus* is the picture of one of those impertinent fellows who resolve to become Poets, having an equal aptitude to become anything that is in fashionable request. When Hermogenes, the finest singer in Rome, refused to sing, *Crispinus* gladly seizes the occasion, and whispers the lady near him—"Entreat the ladies to entreat me to sing, I beseech you." This character is marked by a ludicrous peculiarity which turning on an individual characteristic, must have assisted the audience in the true application. Probably Decker had some remarkable head of hair, and that his locks hung not like "the curls of Hyperion;" for the jeweller's wife admiring among the company, the persons of Ovid, Tibullus, &c., *Crispinus* acquaints her that they were poets, and, since she admires them, promises to become a poet himself. The simple lady further inquires, "if when he is a poet his looks will change? and particularly if his hair will change, and be like those gentlemen's?" "A man," observes *Crispinus*, "may be a poet, and yet not change his hair." "Well!" exclaims the simple jeweller's wife, "we shall see your cunning; yet if you can change your hair, I pray do it."

In two elaborate scenes, poor Decker stands for a full length. Resolved to be a Poet, he haunts the company of Horace: he meets him in the street, and discovers all the variety of his nothingness: he is a student, a stoic, an architect: everything by turns, "and nothing long." Horace impatiently attempts to escape from him, but *Crispinus* foils him at all points. This affectionate admirer is even willing to go over the world with him. He proposes an ingenious project, if Horace will introduce him to Mæcenas. *Crispinus* offers to become "his assistant," assuring him that "he would be content with the next place, not envying thy reputation with thy patron;" and he thinks that Horace and himself "would soon lift out of favour, Virgil, Varius, and the best of them, and enjoy them wholly to ourselves." The restlessness of Horace to extricate himself from this "Hydra of Discourse," the passing friends whom he calls on to assist him, and the glue-like pertinacity of *Crispinus*, are richly coloured.

A ludicrous and exquisitely satirical scene occurs at the trial of *Crispinus* and his colleagues. Jonson has here introduced an invention, which a more recent Satirist so happily applied to our modern Lexiphanes, Dr. Johnson, for his immeasurable polysyllables. Horace is allowed by Augustus to make *Crispinus* swallow a certain pill; the light vomit discharges a great quantity of hard matter, to clear

> "His brain and stomach of their tumorous heats."

These consist of certain affectations in style, and adulteration of words, which offended the Horatian taste: "the basin" is called quickly for, and

* Alluding, no doubt, to the price of seats at some of the minor theatres.

Crispinus gets rid easily of some, but others were of more difficult passage.—

"'Magnificate!' that came up somewhat hard!

Crispinus. 'O barmy froth———'

Augustus. What's that?

Crispinus. 'Inflate!—Turgidous!—and Ventositous'—

Horace.—'Barmy froth, inflate, turgidous, and ventosity are come up.'

Tibullus. O terrible windy words!

Gallus.—A sign of a windy brain."

But all was not yet over: "Prorumpt" made a terrible rumbling, as if his spirit was to have gone with it; and there were others which required all the kind assistance of the Horatian "light vomit." This satirical scene closes with some literary admonitions from the grave Virgil, who details to *Crispinus* the wholesome diet to be observed after his surfeits, which have filled

"His blood and brain thus full of crudities."

Virgil's counsels to the vicious Neologist, who debases the purity of English diction, by affecting new words or phrases, may too frequently be applied.

"You must not hunt for wild outlandish terms
To stuff out a peculiar dialect;
But let your matter run before your words.
And if at any time you chance to meet
Some Gallo-Belgick phrase, you shall not straight
Rack your poor verse to give it entertainment,
But let it pass; and do not think yourself
Much damnified, if you do leave it out
When not the sense could well receive it."

Virgil adds something which breathes all the haughty spirit of Ben: he commands *Crispinus*:

———"Henceforth, learn
To bear yourself more humbly, nor to swell
Or breathe your insolent and idle spite
On him whose laughter can your worst affright:"

and dismisses him

"To some dark place, removed from company;
He will talk idly else after his physic."

"The Satiromastix" may be considered as a parody on "The Poetaster." Jonson, with classical taste, had raised his scene in the court of Augustus: Decker, with great unhappiness, places it in that of William Rufus. The interest of the piece arises from the dexterity with which Decker has accommodated those very characters which Jonson has satirised in his "Poetaster." This gratified those who came every day to the theatre, delighted to take this mimetic revenge on the Arch Bard.

In Decker's prefatory address "To the World," he observes, "Horace haled his Poetasters to the bar*; the Poetasters untrussed Horace: Horace made himself believe that his Burgonian wit† might desperately challenge all comers, and that none durst take up the foils against him." But Decker is the Earl Rivers! He had been blamed for the personal attacks on Jonson; for "whipping his fortunes and condition of life; where the more noble reprehension had been of his mind's deformity:" but for this he retorts on Ben. Some censured Decker for barrenness of invention, in bringing on those characters in his own play whom Jonson had stigmatised; but "it was not improper," he says, "to set the same dog upon Horace, whom Horace had set to worry others." Decker warmly concludes with defying the Jonsonians.

"Let that mad dog Detraction bite till his teeth be worn to the stumps; Envy, feed thy snakes so fat with poison till they burst; World, let all thy adders shoot out their Hydra-headed forked stings! I thank thee, thou true Venusian Horace, for these good words thou givest me. *Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo.*"

The whole address is spirited. Decker was a very popular writer, whose numerous tracts exhibit to posterity a more detailed narrative of the manners of the town in the Elizabethan age, than is elsewhere to be found.

In Decker's Satiromastix, Horace junior is first exhibited in his study, rehearsing to himself an Ode: suddenly the Pindaric rapture is interrupted by the want of a rhyme; this is satirically applied to an unlucky line of Ben's own. One of his "sons," Asinius Bulbo, who is blindly worshipping his great idol, or "his Ningle," as he calls him, amid his admiration of Horace, perpetually breaks out into digressive accounts of what sort of a man his friends take him to be. For one, Horace in wrath prepares an epigram; and for *Crispinus* and *Fannius*, brother bards, who threaten "they'll bring your life and death on the stage, as a bricklayer in a play," he says, "I can bring a prepared troop of gallants, who, for my sake, shall distaste every unsalted line in their fly-blown comedies." "Ay," replies Asinius, "and all men of my rank!" *Crispinus*, Horace calls "a light voluptuous reveller," and *Fannius* "the slightest cobweb-lawn piece of a poet." Both enter, and Horace receives them with all friendship.

* Alluding to the trial of the Poetasters, which takes place before Augustus and his poetical jury of Virgil, Ovid, Tibullus, &c. in Ben's play.

† Decker alludes here to the bastard of Burgundy, who considered himself unmatchable, till he was overthrown in Smithfield by Woodville Earl Rivers.

The scene is here conducted not without skill. Horace complains, that

——————— "when I dip my pen
In distill'd roses, and do strive to drain
Out of mine ink all gall—
Mine enemies, with sharp and searching eyes,
Look through and through me.
And when my lines are measured out as straight
As even parallels, 'tis strange, that still,
Still some imagine that they're drawn awry.
The error is not mine, but in their eye,
That cannot take proportions."

To the querulous satirist, *Crispinus* replies with dignified gravity.

"Horace! to stand within the shot of galling tongues
Proves not your guilt; for, could we write on paper
Made of these turning leaves of heaven, the clouds,
Or speak with angels' tongues, yet wise men know
That some would shake the head, though saints should sing:
Some snakes must hiss, because they're born with stings.
——————— Be not you grieved
If that which you mould fair, upright, and smooth,
Be screw'd awry, made crooked, lame, and vile,
By racking comments.—
So to be bit it rankles not, for Innocence
May with a feather brush off the foul wrong.
But when your *dastard wit will strike at men*
In corners, and in riddles fold the vices
Of your best friends, you must not take to heart
If they take off all gilding from their pills,
And only offer you the bitter core."—

At this the galled Horace winces. *Crispinus* continues, that it is in vain Horace swears, that

——————— "he puts on
The office of an executioner,
Only to strike off the swoln head of sin,
Where'er you find it standing. Say you swear,
And make damnation, parcel of your oath,
That when your lashing jests make all men bleed,
Yet you whip none—court, city, country, friends,
Foes, all must smart alike."—

Fannius, too, joins, and shows Ben the absurd oaths he takes, when he swears to all parties, that he does not mean them. How, then, of five hundred and four, five hundred

"Should all point with their fingers in one instant,
At one and the same man?"

Horace is awkwardly placed between these two friendly remonstrants, to whom he promises perpetual love.

Captain Tucca, a dramatic personage in Jonson's "Poetaster," and a copy of his own Bobadil, whose original the poet had found at "Powles," the fashionable lounge of that day, is here continued with the same spirit; and as that character permitted from the extravagance of its ribaldry, it is now made the vehicle for those more personal retorts, exhibiting the secret history of Ben, which perhaps twitted the great bard more than the keenest wit, or the most solemn admonition which Decker could ever attain. Jonson had cruelly touched on Decker being out at elbows, and made himself too merry with the histrionic tribe: he, who was himself a poet, and had been a Thespian! The blustering captain thus attacks the great wit:—"Do'st stare, my Saracen's head at Newgate? I'll march through thy Dunkirk guts, for shooting jests at me." He insists that as Horace, "that sly knave, whose shoulders were once seen lapp'd in a player's old cast cloak," and who had reflected on *Crispinus's* satin doublet being ravelled out; that he should wear one of *Crispinus's* "old cast sattin suits," and that *Fannius* should write a couple of scenes for his own "strong garlic comedies," and Horace should swear they were his own—he would easily bear "the guilt of conscience." "Thy Muse is but a hagler, and wears clothes upon best be trust (a humorous Deckerian phrase)—thou'rt *great* in somebody's books for this!" Did it become Jonson to gibe at the histrionic tribe, who is himself accused of "treading the stage, as if he were treading mortar*." He once put up
—"a supplication to be a poor journeyman player, and hadst been still so, but that thou couldst not set *a good face* upon't. Thou hast forgot how thou ambled'st in leather-pilch, by a play-waggon in the highway; and took'st mad Jeronimo's part, to get service among the mimics," &c.

Ben's person was, indeed, not gracious in the playfulness of love or fancy. A female, here, thus delineates Ben:—

"That same Horace has the most ungodly face,

* Horace acknowledges he played Zulziman at Paris-garden. "Sir Vaughan: Then, master Horace, you played the part of an honest man—"
Tucca exclaims: "Death of Hercules! he could never play that part well in 's life!"

by my fan; it looks for all the world like a rotten russet-apple, when 'tis bruised. It's better than a spoonful of cinnamon-water next my heart, for me to hear him speak; he sounds it so i' th' nose, and talks and rants like the poor fellows under Ludgate—to see his face make faces, when he reads his songs and sonnets."

Again, we have Ben's face compared with that of his favourite, Horace's —

"You staring Leviathan! look on the sweet visage of Horace; look, parboil'd face, look—he has not his face punchtfull of eylet-holes, like the cover of a warming-pan."—

Joseph Warton has oddly remarked that most of our poets were handsome men. Jonson, however, was not poetical on that score; though his bust is said to resemble Menander's.

Such are some of the personalities with which Decker recriminated.

Horace is thrown into many ludicrous situations. He is told that "admonition is good meat." Various persons bring forward their accusations; and Horace replies, that they envy him,

"Because I hold more worthy company."

The greatness of Ben's genius is by no means denied by his rivals; and Decker makes *Fannius* reply, with noble feelings, and in an elevated strain of poetry :—

"Good Horace, no! my cheeks do blush for thine,
As often as thou speakst so; where one true
And nobly virtuous spirit, for thy best part
Loves thee, I wish one, ten; even from my heart!
I make account, I put up as deep share
In any good man's love, which thy worth earns,
As thou thyself; we envy not to see
Thy friends with bays to crown thy poesy.
No, here the gall lies;—We, that know what stuff
Thy very heart is made of, know the stalk
On which thy learning grows, and can give life
To thy, once dying, baseness; yet must we
Dance anticke on your paper —.
But were thy warp'd soul put in a new mould,
I'd wear thee as a jewel set in gold."

To which one adds, that "jewels, master Horace, must be hanged, you know."—This "Whip of Men," with Asinius his admirer, are brought to court, transformed into satyrs, and bound together; "not lawrefied, but nettle-fied;" crowned with a wreath of nettles.

"With stinging-nettles crown his stinging wit."

Horace is called on to swear, after Asinius had sworn to give up his "Ningle."

"Now, master Horace, you must be a more horrible swearer; for your oath must be, like your wits, of many colours; and like a broker's book, of many parcels."

Horace offers to swear till his hair stands up on end, to be rid of this sting. "Oh, this sting!" alluding to the nettles. "'Tis not your sting of conscience, is it?" asks one. In the inventory of his oaths, there is poignant satire, with strong humour; and it probably exhibits some foibles in the literary habits of our bard.

He swears

"Not to hang himself, even if he thought any man could write plays as well as himself; not to bombast out a new play with the old linings of jests stolen from the Temple's Revels; not to sit in a gallery, when your comedies have entered their actions, and there make vile and bad faces at every line, to make men have an eye to you, and to make players afraid; not to venture on the stage, when your play is ended, and exchange courtesies and compliments with gallants, to make all the house rise and cry—That's Horace! that's he that pens and purges humours. When you bid all your friends to the marriage of a poor couple, that is to say, your Wits and Necessities—alias, a poet's Whitsun-ale—you shall swear that, within three days after, you shall not abroad, in book-binders' shops, brag that your viceroys, or tributary-kings, have done homage to you, or paid quarterage. Moreover, when a knight gives you his passport to travel in and out to his company, and gives you money for God's sake,—you will swear not to make scald and wry-mouth jests upon his knighthood. When your plays are misliked at court, you shall not cry Mew! like a puss-cat, and say, you are glad you write out of the courtier's element; and in brief, when you sup in taverns, amongst your betters, you shall swear not to dip your manners in too much sauce; nor, at table, to fling epigrams or play-speeches about you."

The King observes, that

——————— "He whose pen
Draws both corrupt and clear blood from all men
Careless what vein he pricks; let him not rave
When his own sides are struck; blows, blows do crave."

Such were the bitter apples which Jonson, still in his youth, plucked from the tree of his broad satire, that branched over all ranks in society. That even his intrepidity and hardiness felt the incessant attacks he had raised about him, appears from the close of the Apologetical Epilogue to the Poetaster; where, though he replies with all the consciousness of genius, and all its haughtiness, he closes, with a determination to give over the composition of Comedies! This, however,

like all the vows of a poet, was soon broken; and his masterpieces were subsequently produced.

"*Friend.* Will you not answer then the libels?

Author. No.

Friend. Nor the Untrussers?

Author. Neither.

Friend. You are undone, then.

Author. With whom?

Friend. The world.

Author. The bawd!

Friend. It will be taken to be stupidity or tameness in you.

Author. But they that have incensed me, can in soul
Acquit me of that guilt. They know I dare
To spurn or baffle them; or squirt their eyes
With ink or urine: or I could do worse,
Arm'd with Archilochus' fury, write iambicks,
Would make the desperate lashers hang themselves."—

His Friend tells him that he is accused, that "all his writing is mere railing;" which Jonson nobly compares to "the salt in the old Comedy;" that they say, that he is slow, and "scarce brings forth a play a year."

"*Author.* ——— 'tis true,
I would they could not say that I did that.

He is angry that their

——— "base and beggarly conceits
Should carry it, by the multitude of voices,
Against the most abstracted work, opposed
To the stufft nostrils of the drunken rout."—

And then exclaims, with admirable enthusiasm—

"O this would make a learn'd and liberal soul
To rive his stained quill up to the back,
And damn his long-watch'd labours to the fire;
Things, that were born, when none but the still night,
And the dumb candle, saw his pinching throes."

And again, alluding to these mimics—

"This 'tis that strikes me silent, seals my lips,
And apts me rather to sleep out my time,
Than I would waste it in contemned strifes
With these vile Ibides, these unclean birds,
That make their mouths their clysters, and still purge
From their hot entrails*. But I leave the mobsters
To their own fate. And since the Comic Muse
Hath proved so ominous to me, I will try
If Tragedy have a more kind aspect.
Leave me! There's something come into my thought
That must and shall be sung, high and aloof,
Safe from the wolf's black jaw, and the dull ass's hoof.

Friend. I reverence these raptures, and obey them."

Such was the noble strain in which Jonson replied to his detractors in the town, and to his rivals about him. Yet this poem, composed with all the dignity and force of the bard, was not suffered to be repeated. It was stopped by authority. But Jonson, in preserving it in his works, sends it "TO POSTERITY, that it may make a difference between their manners that provoked me then, and mine that neglected them ever."

* Among those arts of imitation which man has derived from the practice of animals, Naturalists assure us that he owes *the use of Clysters* to the Egyptian Ibis. There are some who pretend this medicinal invention comes from the stork. The French are more like *Ibises* than we are: *ils se donnent des lavements eux-mêmes.* But as it is rather uncertain what the Egyptian *Ibis* is; whether, as translated in Leviticus xi. 17, the cormorant, or a species of stork, or only "a great owl," as we find in Calmet; it would be safest to attribute the invention to the unknown bird. I recollect, in Wickliffe's version of the Pentateuch, which I once saw in MS. in the possession of my valued friend Mr. Douce, that that venerable Translator interpolates a little, to tell us that the Ibis "giveth to herself a purge."

CAMDEN AND BROOKE.

Literary, like political history, is interested in the cause of an obscure individual, when deprived of his just rights —character of CAMDEN—BROOKE's "Discovery of Errors" in the Britannia—his work disturbed in the printing—afterwards enlarged, but never suffered to be published—whether BROOKE's motive was personal rancour?—the persecuted author becomes vindictive—his keen reply to CAMDEN—CAMDEN's beautiful picture of calumny—BROOKE furnishes a humorous companion-piece—CAMDEN's want of magnanimity and justice—when great authors are allowed to suppress the works of their adversary, the public receives the injury and the insult.

IN the literary as well as the political commonwealth, the cause of an obscure individual violently deprived of his just rights is a common one. We protest against the power of genius itself, when it strangles rather than wrestles with its adversary, or combats in mail against a naked man. The general interests of literature are involved by the illegitimate suppression of a work, of which the purpose is to correct another, whatever may be the invective which accompanies the correction: nor are we always to assign to malignant motives even this spirit of invective, which, though it betrays a contracted genius, may also show the earnestness of an honest one.

The quarrel between CAMDEN, the great author of the Britannia, and BROOKE, the York Herald, may illustrate these principles. It has hitherto been told to the shame of the inferior genius; but the history of Brooke was imperfectly known to his contemporaries. Crushed by oppression, his tale was marred in the telling. A century sometimes passes away before the world can discover the truth even of a private history.

Brooke is aspersed as a man of the meanest talents, insensible to the genius of Camden, rankling with envy at his fame, and correcting the "Britannia" out of mere spite.

When the history of Brooke is known, and his labours fairly estimated, we shall blame him much less than he has been blamed; and censure Camden, who has escaped all censure, and whose conduct, in the present instance, was destitute of magnanimity and justice.

The character of the author of "Britannia" is great; and this error of his feelings, now first laid to his charge, may be attributed as much to the weakness of the age as to his own extreme timidity, and perhaps to a little pride. Conscious as was Camden of enlarged views, we can easily pardon him for the contempt he felt, when he compared them with the subordinate ones of his cynical adversary.

Camden possessed one of those strongly-directed minds which early in life plan some vast labour, while their imagination and their industry feed on it for many successive years; and they shed the flower and sweetness of their lives in the preparation of a work which at its maturity excites the gratitude of their nation. His passion for our national antiquities discovered itself even in his school-days, grew up with him at the University; and, when afterwards engaged in his public duties as master at Westminster school, he there composed his "Britannia," "at spare hours, and on festival days." To the perpetual care of his work, he voluntarily sacrificed all other views in life, and even drew himself away from domestic pleasures; for he refused marriage and preferments, which might interrupt his beloved studies! The work, at length produced, received all the admiration due to so great an enterprise; and even foreigners, as the work was composed in the universal language of learning, could sympathise with Britons, when they contemplated the stupendous labour. Camden was honoured by the titles (for the very names of illustrious genius become such), of the Varro, the Strabo, and the Pausanias, of Britain.

While all Europe admired the "Britannia," a cynical genius, whose mind seemed bounded by his confined studies, detected one error amidst the noble views the mighty volume embraced;

the single one perhaps he could perceive, and for which he stood indebted to his office as York Herald. Camden, in an appendage to the end of each county, had committed numerous genealogical errors, which he afterwards affected, in his defence, to consider as trivial matters in so great a history, and treats his adversary with all the contempt and bitterness he could inflict on him; but Ralph Brooke entertained very high notions of the importance of heraldical studies, and conceived that the "Schoolmaster" Camden, as he considered him, had encroached on the rights and honours of his College of Heralds. When particular objects engage our studies, we are apt to raise them in the scale of excellence to a degree disproportioned to their real value; and are thus liable to incur ridicule. But it should be considered that many useful students are not philosophers, and the pursuits of their lives are never ridiculous to them. It is not the interest of the public to degrade this class too low. Every species of study contributes to the perfection of human knowledge, by that universal bond which connects them all in a philosophical mind.

Brooke prepared "A Discovery of certain Errors in the much-commended Britannia." When we consider Brooke's character, as headstrong with heraldry as Don Quixote's with romances of chivalry, we need not attribute his motives (as Camden himself, with the partial feelings of an author, does, and subsequent writers echo) to his envy at Camden's promotion to be Clarencieux King-of-Arms; for it appears that Brooke began his work before this promotion. The indecent excesses of his pen, with the malicious charges of plagiarism he brings against Camden for the use he made of Leland's collections, only show the insensibility of the mere heraldist to the nobler genius of the historian. Yet Brooke had no ordinary talents: his work is still valuable for his own peculiar researches; but his *naïve* shrewdness, his pointed precision, the bitter invective, and the caustic humour of his cynical pen, give an air of originality, if not of genius, which no one has dared to notice. Brooke's first work against Camden was violently disturbed in its progress, and hurried, in a mutilated state, into the world, without licence or a publisher's name. Thus impeded, and finally crushed, the howl of persecution followed his name; and subsequent writers servilely traced his character from their partial predecessors.

But Brooke, though denied the fair freedom of the press, and a victim to the powerful connexions of Camden, calmly pursued his silent labour with great magnanimity. He wrote his "Second Discovery of Errors," an enlargement of the first. This he carefully finished for the press, but could never get published. The secret history of the controversy may be found there *.

Brooke had been loudly accused of indulging a personal rancour against Camden, and the motive of his work was attributed to envy of his great reputation; a charge constantly repeated.

Yet this does not appear; for when Brooke first began his "Discovery of Errors," he did not design its publication; for he liberally offered Camden his Observations and Collections. They were fastidiously, perhaps haughtily, rejected; on this pernicious and false principle, that to correct his errors in genealogy might discredit the whole work. On which absurdity Brooke shrewdly remarks—"As if healing the sores would have maimed the body." He speaks with more humility on this occasion than an insulted, yet a skilful writer, was likely to do, who had his labours considered, as he says, "worthy neither of thanks nor acceptance."

"The rat is not so contemptible but he may help the lion, at a pinch, out of those nets wherein his strength is hampered; and the words of an inferior may often carry matter in them to admonish his superior of some important consideration; and surely, of what account soever I might have seemed to this learned man, yet, in respect to my profession and courteous offer, (I being an officer-of-arms, and he then but a schoolmaster), might well have vouchsafed the perusal of my notes."

When he published, our herald stated the reasons of writing against Camden with good-humour, and rallies him on his "incongruity in his principles of heraldry—for which I challenge him!—for depriving some nobles of issue to succeed them, who had issue, of whom are descended many worthy families; denying barons and earls that were, and making barons and earls of others that were not; mistaking the son for the father, and the father for the son; affirming legitimate children to be illegitimate, and illegitimate to be legitimate; and framing incestuous and unnatural marriages, making the father to marry the son's wife, and the son his own mother."

He treats Camden with the respect due to his genius, while he judiciously distinguishes where the greatest ought to know to yield.

"The most abstruse arts I profess not, but yield the palm and victory to mine adversary, the

* This work was not given to the public till 172[illegible] a small quarto, with a fine portrait of Brook[illegible] More than a century had elapsed since its forcibl[illegible] suppression. Anstis printed it from the fair MS which Brooke had left behind him. The author's paternal affection seemed fondly to imagine its child might be worthy of posterity, though calumniated by its contemporaries.

great learned Mr. Camden; with whom, yet, a long experimented navigator may contend about his chart and compass, about havens, creeks, and sounds; so I, an ancient herald, a little dispute, without imputation of audacity, concerning the honour of arms, and the truth of honourable descents."—

Brooke had seen, as he observes, in four editions of the Britannia, a continued race of errors, in false descents, &c. and he continues, with a witty allusion:—

"Perceiving, that even the brains of many learned men beyond the seas had misconceived and miscarried in the travail and birth of their relations, being gotten, as it were, with child (as Diomedes's mares) by the blasts of his erroneous puffs; I could not but a little question the original father of their absurdities, being so far blown, with the trumpet of his learning and fame, into foreign lands."

He proceeds with instances of several great authors on the Continent having been misled by the statements of Camden.

Thus largely have I quoted from Brooke, to show, that at first he never appears to have been influenced by the mean envy, or the personal rancour, of which he is constantly accused. As he proceeded in his work, which occupied him several years, his reproaches are whetted with a keener edge, and his accusations are less generous. But to what are we to attribute this? To the contempt and persecution Brooke so long endured from Camden: these acted on his vexed and degraded spirit, till it burst into the excesses of a man heated with injured feelings.

When Camden took his station in the Herald's College with Brooke, whose offers of his notes he had refused to accept, they soon found what it was for two authors to live under the same roof, who were impatient to write against each other. The cynical York, at first, would twit the new king-of-arms, perpetually affirming that "his predecessor was a more able herald than any who lived in this age:" a truth, indeed, acknowledged by Dugdale. On this occasion, once the king-of-arms gave malicious York "the lie!" reminding the crabbed herald of "his own learning; who, as a scholar, was famous through all the provinces of Christendom."—"So that (adds Brooke) now I learnt, that before him, when we speak in commendation of any other, to say, I must always except Plato."—Camden would allow of no private communication between them; and in "*Sermonibus Convivalibus*," in his Table-talk, "the heat and height of his spirit" often scorched the contemned Yorkist, whose rejected "Discovery of Errors" had no doubt been too frequently enlarged, after such rough convivialities. Brooke now resolved to print; but, in printing the work, the press was disturbed, and his house was entered by "this learned man, his friends, and the stationers." The latter were alarmed for the sale of the Britannia, which might have been injured by this rude attack. The work was therefore printed in an unfinished state: part was intercepted; and the author stopped, by authority, from proceeding any farther.—Some imperfect copies got abroad.

The treatment the exasperated Brooke now incurred, was more provoking than Camden's refusal of his notes, and the haughtiness of his "Sermonibus Convivalibus." The imperfect work was, however, laid before the public, so that Camden could not refuse to notice its grievous charges. He composed an angry reply in Latin, addressed *ad Lectorem!* and never mentioning Brooke by name, contemptuously alludes to him only by a *Quidam* and *Iste* (a certain person, and He!)—"He considers me (cries the mortified Brooke, in his second suppressed work) as an *Individuum vagum*, and makes me but a *Quidam* in his pamphlet, standing before him as a schoolboy, while he whips me. Why does he reply in Latin to an English accusation? He would disguise himself in his school-rhetoric; wherein, like the cuttle-fish, being stricken, he thinks to hide and shift himself away in the ink of his rhetoric. I will clear the waters again."

He fastens on Camden's former occupation, virulently accusing him of the manners of a pedagogue:—"A man may perceive an immoderate and eager desire of vain glory growing in hand, ever since he used to teach and correct children for these things, according to the opinion of some, *in mores et naturam abeunt.*" He complains of "the school-hyperboles" which Camden exhausts on him, among which Brooke is compared to "the strumpet Leontion," who wrote against "the divine Theophrastus." To this Brooke keenly replies:

"Surely, had Theophrastus dealt with women's matters, a woman, though mean, might in reason have contended with him. A king must be content to be laughed at, if he come into Apelles's shop, and dispute about colours and portraiture. I am not ambitious nor envious to carp at matters of higher learning than matters of heraldry, which I profess: that is the slipper, wherein I know a slip when I find it. But see your cunning; you can, with the blur of your pen, dipped in copperas and gall, make me learned and unlearned; nay, you can almost change my sex, and make me a whore, like Leontion; and, taking your silver pen again, make yourself the divine Theophrastus."

At the close of Camden's answer, he introduced the allegorical picture of calumny, that elegant invention of the Grecian fancy of Apelles, painted

by him when suffering under the false accusations of a rival. The picture is described by Lucian; but it has received many happy touches from the classical hand of the master of Westminster school. As a literary satire, he applies it with great dignity. I give here a translation, but I preserve the original Latin in the note, as Camden's reply to Brooke is not easily to be procured.

"But though I am not disposed to waste more words on these, and this sort of men, yet I cannot resist the temptation of adding a slight sketch, for I cannot give that vivacity of colouring of the picture of the great artist Apelles, that our Antiphilus and the like, whose ears are ever open to calumny, may, in contemplating it, find a reflection of themselves.

"On the right hand sits a man, who, to show his credulity, is remarkable for his prodigious ears, similar to those of Midas. He extends his hand, to greet Calumny, who is approaching him. The two diminutive females around him are Ignorance and Suspicion. Opposite to them, Calumny advances, betraying, in her countenance and gesture, the savage rage and anger working in her tempestuous breast: her left hand holds a flaming torch; while, with her right, she drags by the hair a youth, who, stretching his uplifted hands to Heaven, is calling on the immortal powers to bear testimony to his innocence. She is preceded by a man, of a pallid and impure appearance, seemingly wasting away under some severe disease, except that his eye sparkles, and has not the dulness usual to such. That Envy is here meant, you readily conjecture. Some diminutive females, frauds and deceits, attend her as companions, whose office is to encourage and instruct, and studiously to adorn their mistress. In the background, Repentance, sadly arrayed in a mournful, worn-out, and ragged garment, who with averted head, with tears and shame, acknowledges and prepares to receive Truth, approaching from a distance *."

This elegant picture, so happily introduced into a piece of literary controversy, appears to have only slightly affected the mind of Brooke, which was probably of too stout a grain to take the folds of Grecian drapery. Instead of sympathising with its elegance, he breaks out into a horse-laugh; and, what is quite unexpected among such grave inquiries, into a ludicrous tale in verse, which, though it has not Grecian fancy has broad English humour, where he maliciously insinuates that Camden had appropriated to his own use, or "new-coated his Britannia" with Leland's MSS. and disguised what he had stolen.

"Now, to show himself as good a painter as he is a herald, he propounded, at the end of his book, a table (*i. e.* a picture) of his own invention, being nothing comparable to Apelles, as he himself confesseth, and we believe him; for, like the rude painter that was fain to write, 'This is a Horse,' upon his painted horse, he writes upon his picture the names of all that furious rabble therein expressed;—which, for to requite him, I will return a tale of John Fletcher (some time of Oxford) and his horse. Neither can this fable be any disparagement to his table, being more ancient and authenticall, and far more conceipted, than his envious picture. And thus it was:

A TALE (NOT OF A ROASTED) BUT OF A PAINTED HORSE.

John Fletcher, famous, and a man well known,
But using not his sirname's trade alone†,
Did hackney out poor jades for common hire,
Not fit for any pastime but to tire.

His conscience, once, surveying his jade's stable,
Prick'd him, for keeping horses so unable.
Oh why should I, saith John, by scholars thrive,
For jades that will not carry, lead, nor drive?

To mend the matter, out he starts, one night,
And having spied a palfrey somewhat white,
He takes him up, and up he mounts his back,
Rides to his house, and there he turns him black;

* "Verum enimverò de his et hoc genere hominum ne verbum amplius addam, tabellam tamen summi illius artificis Apellis, cùm colorum vivacitate depingere non possim, verbis leviter adumbrabo et proponam, ut Antiphilus noster, suique similes, et qui calumniis credunt, hanc, et in hac seipsos semel simulque intueantur.

"Ad dextram sedet quidam, quia credulus, auribus prælongis insignis, quales ferè illæ Midæ feruntur. Manum porrigit procul accedenti Calumniæ. Circumstant eum mulierculæ duæ, Ignorantia ac Suspicio. Adit aliunde propiùs Calumnia eximiè compta, vultu ipso et gestu corporis efferens rabiem, et iram æstuanti conceptam pectore præ se ferens: sinistra facem tenens flammantem, dextra secum adolescentem capillis arreptum, manus ad superos tendentem, obtestantemque immortalium deorum fidem, trahit. Anteit vir pallidus, in speciem impurus, acie oculorum minimè hebeti, cæterùm planè iis similis, qui gravi aliquo morbo contabuerunt. Hic Livor est, ut facilè conjicias. Quin et mulierculæ aliquot Insidiæ et Fallaciæ comites Calumniam comitantur. Harum est muna dominam hortari, instruere, comere, et subornar A tergo, habitu lugubri, pullato, laceroque Pœni tentia subsequitur, quæ capite in tergum deflex cum lachrymis, ac pudore procul venientem Ve tatem agnoscit, et excipit."

† A *Fletcher* is a maker of bows and arrows.—Ash.

Marks him in forehead, feet, in rump, and crest,
As coursers mark those horses which are best.
So neatly John had coloured every spot,
That the right owner sees him, knows him not.

Had he but feather'd his new-painted breast,
He would have seemèd Pegasus at least.
Who but John Fletcher's horse, in all the town,
Amongst all hackney, purchased this renown?

But see the luck; John Fletcher's horse, one night,
By rain was wash'd again almost to white.
His first right owner, seeing such a change,
Thought he should know him, but his hue was strange!

But eyeing him, and spying out his steed,
By flea-bit spots of his now washèd weed,
Seizes the horse; so Fletcher was attainted,
And did confess the horse—he stole and painted.

To close with honour to Brooke; in his graver moments, he warmly repels the accusation Camden raised against him, as an enemy to learning, and appeals to many learned scholars, who had tasted of his liberality at the Universities, towards their maintenance; but, in an elevated tone, he asserts his right to deliver his animadversions as York-herald.

"I know (says Brooke) the great advantage my adversary has over me, in the received opinion of the world. If some will blame me for that my writings carry some characters of spleen against him, men of pure affections, and not partial, will think reason that he should, by ill hearing, lose the pleasure he conceived by ill speaking. But since I presume not to understand above that which is meet for me to know, I must not be discouraged, nor fret myself, because of the malicious; for I find myself seated upon a rock, that is sure from tempests and waves, from whence I have a prospect into his errors and waverings. I do confess his great worth and merit, and that we Britons are in some sort beholding to him; and might have been much more, if God had lent him the grace to have played the faithful steward, in the talent committed to his trust and charge."

Such was the dignified and the intrepid reply of Ralph Brooke, a man whose name is never mentioned without an epithet of reproach; and who, in his own day, was hunted down, and not suffered, vindictive as he was no doubt, to relieve his bitter and angry spirit, by pouring it forth to the public eye.

But the story is not yet closed. Camden, who wanted the magnanimity to endure with patient dignity the corrections of an inferior genius, had the wisdom, with the meanness, silently to adopt his useful corrections, but would never confess the hand which had brought them*.

Thus hath Ralph Brooke told his own tale undisturbed, and, after the lapse of more than a century, the press has been opened to him. Whenever a great author is suffered to gag the mouth of his adversary, Truth receives the insult. But there is another point, more essential to inculcate in literary controversy. Ought we to look too scrupulously into the motives which may induce an inferior author to detect the errors of a greater? A man from no amiable motive may perform a proper action: Ritson was useful after Warton; nor have we a right to ascribe it to any concealed motives, which, after all, may be doubtful. In the present instance, our much-abused Ralph Brooke first appears to have composed his elaborate work from the most honourable motives: the offer he made of his Notes to Camden seems a sufficient evidence. The pride of a great man first led Camden into an error, and that error plunged him into all the barbarity of persecution; thus, by force, covering his folly. Brooke overvalued his studies: it is the nature of those peculiar minds, adapted to excel in such contracted pursuits. He undertook an ungracious office, and he has suffered, by being placed by the side of the illustrious genius with whom he has so skilfully combated, in his own province; and thus he has endured contempt, without being contemptible. The public are not less the debtors to such unfortunate, yet intrepid authors†.

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* In Anstis's Edition of "A Second Discoverie of Errors in the much commended Britannia, &c. 1724," the reader will find all the passages in the Britannia of the edition of 1594 to which Brooke made exceptions, placed column-wise, with the following edition of it in 1600. It is, as Anstis observes, a debt to truth, without making any reflections.

† There is a sensible observation in the old Biographia Britannia, on Brooke. "From the splenetic attack originally made by Rafe Brooke upon the Britannica, arose very *great advantages to the public*, by the shifting and bringing to light as good, perhaps a better and more authentic account of our nobility, than had been given at that time of those in any other country of Europe." p. 1135.

MARTIN MAR-PRELATE.

Of the two prevalent factions in the reign of Elizabeth, the Catholics and the Puritans—Elizabeth's philosophical indifference offends both—Maunsell's Catalogue omits the books of both parties—of the Puritans, "the mild and moderate, with the fierce and fiery," a great religious body covering a political one—Thomas Cartwright, the chief of the Puritans, and his rival Whitgift—attempts to make the Ecclesiastical paramount to the Civil power—his plan in dividing the country into comitial, provincial, and national assemblies, to be concentrated under the secret head at Warwick, where Cartwright was elected "perpetual Moderator!"—after the most bitter controversies, Cartwright became very compliant to his old rival Whitgift, when Archbishop of Canterbury—of MARTIN MAR-PRELATE—his sons—specimens of their popular ridicule and invective—Cartwright approves of this mode of controversy—better counteracted by the wits than by the grave admonishers—specimens of the ANTI-MARTIN MAR-PRELATES—of the authors of these surreptitious publications.

THE Reformation, or the new Religion, as it was then called, under Elizabeth, was the most philosophical she could form, and therefore the most hateful to the zealots of all parties. It was worthy of her genius, and of a better age! Her sole object was, a deliverance from the Papal usurpation. Her own supremacy maintained, she designed to be the great sovereign of a great people; and the Catholic, for some time, was called to her council-board, and entered with the Reformer into the same church. But wisdom itself is too weak to regulate human affairs, when the passions of men rise up in obstinate insurrection. Elizabeth neither won over the Reformers nor the Catholics. An excommunicating bull, precipitated by Papal Machiavelism, driving on the brutalised obedience of its slaves, separated the friends. This was a political error arising from a misconception of the weakness of our government; and when discovered as such, a tolerating dispensation was granted "till better times;" an unhealing expedient, to join again a dismembered nation! It would surprise many, were they aware how numerous were our ancient families and our eminent characters who still remained Catholics*. The country was then divided, and Englishmen who were heroic Romanists, fell the terrible victims.

On the other side, the national evil took a new form. It is probable that the Queen, regarding the mere ceremonies of religion, now venerable with age, as matters of indifference, and her fine taste perhaps still lingering amid the solemn gorgeousness of the Roman service, and her senses and her emotions excited by the religious scenery, did not share in that abhorrence of the paintings and the images, the chant and the music, the censer and the altar, and the pomp of the prelatical habits, which was prompting many well-intentioned Reformers to reduce the ecclesiastical state into apostolical nakedness and primitive rudeness. She was slow to meet this austerity of feeling, which in this country at length extirpated those arts which exalt our nature; and for this, these pious Vandals nicknamed the Queen "the untamed heifer;" and the fierce Knox expressly wrote his "First Blast against the monstrous Government of Women." Of these Reformers, many had imbibed the republican notions of Calvin. In their hatred of Popery,

* The Church History by Dodd, a Catholic, fills three vols. folio: it is very rare and curious. Much of our own domestic history is interwoven in that of the fugitive papists, and the materials of this work are frequently drawn from their own archives, preserved in their seminaries at Douay, Valladolid, &c. which have not been accessible to Protestant writers. Here I discovered a copious nomenclature of eminent persons, and many literary men, with many unknown facts, both of a private and public nature. It is useful, at times, to know whether an English author was a Catholic.

they imagined that they had not gone far enough in their wild notions of reform, for they viewed it, still shadowed out in the new hierarchy of the bishops. The fierce Calvin, in his little church at Geneva, presumed to rule a great nation on the scale of a parish institution; copying the apostolical equality at a time when the church (say the Episcopalians) had all the weakness of infancy, and could live together in a community of all things, from a sense of their common poverty. Be this as it may; the dignified ecclesiastical order was a vulnerable institution, which could do no greater injury, and might effect as much public good, as any other order in the state*. My business is not with this discussion. I mean to show how the republican system of these Reformers ended in a political struggle, which, crushed in the reign of Elizabeth, and beaten down in that of James, so furiously triumphed under Charles. Their history exhibits the curious spectacle of a great religious body covering a political one; such as was discovered among the Jesuits, and such as may again distract the empire, in some new and unexpected shape.

Elizabeth was harassed by the two factions of the intriguing Catholic, and the disguised Republican. The age abounded with libels †. Many a *Benedicite* was handed to her from the Catholics; but a portentous personage, masked, stepped forth from a club of PURITANS, and terrified the nation by continued visitations, yet was never visible till the instant of his adieus—"starting, like a guilty thing upon a fearful summons!"

Men echo the tone of their age, yet still the same unvarying human nature is at work; and the Puritans ‡, who in the reign of Elizabeth imagined

* I refer the reader to Selden's "Table Talk" for many admirable ideas on "Bishops." That enlightened genius, who was no friend to the ecclesiastical temporal power, acknowledges the absolute necessity of this order in a great government. The preservers of our literature and our morals they ought to be, and many have been. When the political reformers ejected the bishops out of the house, what did they gain? a more vulgar prating race, but even more lordly! Selden says, "The bishops being put out of the house, whom will they lay the fault upon now? When the dog is beat out of the room, where will they lay the stink?"

† The freedom of the press hardly subsisted in Elizabeth's reign; and yet libels abounded! A clear demonstration that nothing is really gained by those violent suppressions and expurgatory indexes which power in its usurpation may enforce At a time when they did not dare even to publish the titles of such libels, yet were they spread about, and even hoarded. The most ancient catalogue of our vernacular literature is that by Andrew Maunsell, published in 1595. It consists of Divinity, Mathematics, Medicine, &c.; but the third part which he promised, and which to us would have been the most interesting, of "Rhetoric, History, Poetry, and Policy," never appeared. In the Preface, such was the temper of the times, and of Elizabeth, we discover that he has deprived us of a catalogue of the works alluded to in our text, for he thus distinctly points at them: "The books written by the *fugitive papistes*, as also those that are *written against the present government* (meaning those of the Puritans), I doe not think meete for me to meddle withall." In one part of his catalogue, however, he contrived to insert the following passage; the burden of the song seems to have been chorused by the ear of our cautious Maunsell. He is noticing a Pierce Plowman in prose. "I did not see the beginning of this booke, but it ended thus:—

"God save the king, and speed the Plough,
And send the *prelats* care inough,
Inough, inough, inough." p. 80.

Few of our native productions are so rare as the *Martin Mar-Prelate* publications. I have not found them in the public repositories of our national literature. There they have been probably rejected with indignity, though their answerers have been preserved; yet even these are almost of equal rarity and price. They were rejected in times less enlightened than the present. In a National Library every book deserves preservation. By the rejection of these satires, however absurd or infamous, we have lost a link in the great chain of our National Literature and History.

‡ We know them by the name of Puritans, a nickname obtained by their affecting superior sanctity; but I find them often distinguished by the more humble appellative of Precisians. As men do not leap up, but climb on rocks, it is probable they were only *precise* before they were *pure*. A satirist of their day, in "Rythmes against Martin Marre-Prelate," melts their attributes into one verse:—

"The sacred sect, and perfect *pure precise*."

A more laughing satirist, "Pasquill of England to Martin Junior," persists in calling them Pruritans, *a pruritu!* for their perpetual itching, or a desire to do something. Elizabeth herself only considered them as "a troublesome sort of people:" even that great politician could not detect the political monster in a mere chrysalis of Reform. I find, however, in a poet of the Elizabethan age, an

it was impossible to go too far in the business of reform, were the spirits called *Roundheads* under Charles, and who have got another nickname in our days. These wanted a Reformation of a Reformation: they aimed at reform, but they designed Revolution; and they would not accept of toleration, because they had determined on predominance.

Of this faction, the chief was THOMAS CARTWRIGHT, a person of great learning, and doubtless of great ambition. Early in life a disappointed man, the progress was easy to a disaffected subject. At a philosophy act, in the University of Cambridge, in the royal presence, the queen preferred and rewarded his opponent, for the slighter and more attractive elegances, in which the learned Cartwright was deficient. He felt the wound rankle in his ambitious spirit. He began, as Sir George Paul, in his Life of Archbishop Whitgift, expresses it, "to kick against her Ecclesiastical Government." He expatriated himself several years, and returned fierce with the republican spirit he had caught among the Calvinists at Geneva, which aimed at the extirpation of the Bishops. It was once more his fate to be poised

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evident change in the public feeling respecting the *Puritans*, who being always most active when the government was most in trouble, their political views were discovered. Warner, in his "Albion's England," describes them:—

"If ever England will in aught prevent her own mishap,
Against these Skommes (no terme too gross) let England shut the gap;
With giddie heads —
Their countrie's foes they helpt, and most their country harm'd.
If *Hypocrites* why *Puritaines* we term, be asked, in breefe,
'Tis but an *ironised terme*: good-fellow so spells theefe!"

The gentle-humoured FULLER, in his Church History, felt a tenderness for the name of *Puritan*, which, after the mad follies they had played during the Commonwealth, was then held in abhorrence. He could not venture to laud the good men of that party, without employing a new term to conceal the odium. In noticing, under the date of 1563, that the bishops urged the clergy of their dioceses to press uniformity, &c. he adds, "Such as refused were branded with the name of Puritans; a name which in this nation began in this year, subject to several senses, and various in the acceptions. *Puritan* was taken for the opposers of hierarchy and church service, as resenting of superstition. But the nick-name was quickly improved by profane mouths to abuse pious persons. We will decline the word to prevent exceptions, which, if casually slipping from our pen, the reader knoweth that only *non-conformists* are intended." lib. ix. p. 76. Fuller, however, divides them into two classes, "the mild and moderate, and the fierce and fiery." HEYLIN, in his history of the Presbyterians, blackens them as so many political devils; and NEALE, in his history of the Puritans, blanches them into a sweet and almond whiteness.

Let us be thankful to these PURITANS for a political lesson. They began their quarrels on the most indifferent matters. They raised disturbances about the "Romish Rags," by which they described the decent surplice as well as the splendid scarlet chimere* thrown over the white linen rochet with the square cap worn by the bishops. The scarlet robe, to please their sullen fancy, was changed into black satin: but these men soon resolved to deprive the bishops of more than a scarlet robe. The affected niceties of these PRECISIANS, dismembering our images, and scratching at our paintings, disturbed the uniformity of the religious service. A clergyman in a surplice was turned out of the church. Some wore square caps, some round, some abhorred all caps. The communion-table placed in the East, was considered as an idolatrous altar, and was now dragged into the middle of the church, where, to show their contempt, it was always made the filthiest seat in the church. They used to kneel at the sacrament; now they would sit, because that was a proper attitude for a supper; then they would not sit, but stand: at length they tossed the elements about, because the bread was wafers, and not from a loaf. Among their *precisiness* was a qualm at baptism: the water was to be taken from a basin, and not from a fount; then they would not name their children; or if they did, they would neither have Grecian, nor Roman, nor Saxon names, but Hebrew ones, which they ludicrously translated into English, and which, as Heylin observes, "many of them when they came to age were ashamed to own;" such as "Accepted—Ashes—Fight-the-good-Fight-of-Faith—Joy-again—Kill-sin, &c."

Who could have foreseen, that some pious men, quarrelling about the square caps and the rochets of bishops, should at length attack bishops themselves; and, by an easy transition, passing from bishops to kings, finally close in levellers!

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* So Heylin writes the word: but in the "Rythmes against Martin," a contemporary production, the term is *Chiver*. It is not in Cotgrave.

against another rival, Whitgift, the Queen's Professor of Divinity. Cartwright, in some lectures, advanced his new doctrines; and these innovations soon raised a formidable party, "buzzing their conceits into the green heads of the University." Whitgift regularly preached at Cartwright, but to little purpose; for, when Cartwright preached at St. Mary's, they were forced to take down the windows. Once, our sly polemic, taking advantage of the absence of Whitgift, so powerfully operated, in three sermons on one Sunday, that in the evening his victory declared itself, by the students of Trinity College rejecting their surplices, as Papistical badges. Cartwright was now to be confuted by other means. The University refused him his degree of D. D.; condemned the lecturer to silence; and at length performed that last feeble act of power, Expulsion. In a heart already alienated from the established authorities, this could only envenom a bitter spirit. Already he had felt a personal dislike to royalty, and now he had received an insult from the University: these were motives, which, though concealed, could not fail to work, in a courageous mind, whose new forms of religion accorded with his political feelings. The "Degrees" of the University, which he now declared to be "unlawful," were to be considered "as limbs of Antichrist." The whole hierarchy was to be exterminated for a republic of Presbyters; till, through the church, the republican, as we shall see, discovered a secret passage to the Cabinet of his Sovereign, where he had many protectors.

Such is my conception of the character of Cartwright. The reader is enabled to judge for himself, by the note *.

* I give a remarkable extract from the Writings of Cartwright. It will prove two points. First, that the *religion* of those men became a cover for a *political* design; which was *to raise the ecclesiastical above the civil power*. Just the reverse of Hobbes's after scheme; but while theorists thus differ and seem to refute one another, they in reality work for an identical purpose. Secondly, it will show the not uncommon absurdity of man: while these non-conformists were affecting to annihilate the hierarchy of England, as a remains of the Romish supremacy, they themselves were designing one, according to their own fresher scheme. It was to be a state or republic of Presbyters, in which *all Sovereigns* were to hold themselves, to use their style, as "Nourisses, or servants under the Church; the Sovereigns were to be as subjects, they were to veil their sceptres and to offer their crowns as the prophet speaketh, *to lick the dust of the feet of the Church*." These are Cartwright's words, in his "Defence of the Admonition." But he is still bolder, in a joint production with *Travers*. He insists that "the *Monarchs of the World* should give up their *sceptres and crowns* unto him (Jesus Christ), who is *represented by the Officers of the Church*." See "A full and plain declaration of Ecclesiastical Discipline," p. 185. One would imagine he was a disguised Jesuit, and an advocate for the Pope's supremacy. But observe how these saintly Republicans would govern the State. Cartwright is explicit, and very ingenious. "The world is now deceived, that thinketh that the *Church* must be framed according to the *Commonwealth*, and the *Church Government* according to the *Civil Government*; which is as much as to say, as if a man should fashion his house according to his hangings; whereas indeed, it is clean contrary. That as the hangings are made fit for the house, so the Commonwealth must be made to agree with the Church, and the government thereof with her government; for, as the house is before the hangings, therefore the hangings, which come after, must be framed to the house, which was before; so the Church being before there was a commonwealth, and the commonwealth coming after, must be fashioned, and made suitable to the Church; otherwise, God is made to give place to men, heaven to earth."—CARTWRIGHT'S *Defence of the Admonition*, p. 181.

Warburton's "Alliance between Church and State," which was in his time considered as a hardy paradox, is mawkish in its pretensions, compared with this sacerdotal republic. It is not wonderful that the wisest of our Sovereigns, that great politician Elizabeth, should have punished with death these democrats; but it is wonderful to discover, that these inveterate enemies to the Church of Rome were only trying to transfer its absolute power into their own hands! They wanted to turn the Church into a democracy. They fascinated the people, by telling them, that there would be no beggars, were there no bishops; that every man would be a governor, by setting up a Presbytery. From the Church, I repeat, it is scarcely a single step to the cabinet. Yet the early Puritans come down to us as persecuted saints. Doubtless, there were a few honest saints among them; but they were as mad politicians as their race afterwards proved to be, to whom they left so many fatal legacies. Cartwright uses the very language a certain cast of political reformers have recently done. He declares, "An establishment may be made without the magistrate;" and told the people, that "if every hair of their head was

But Cartwright chilled by an imprisonment, and witnessing some of his party condemned, and some executed; after having long sustained the most elevated and rigid tone, suddenly let his alp of ice

dissolve away in the gentlest thaw that ever occurred in political life. Ambitious he was, but not of martyrdom! His party appeared once formidable *, and his protection at Court sure. I have read several letters of the Earl of Leicester, in MS. that show he always shielded Cartwright, whenever in danger. Many of the ministers of Elizabeth were Puritans; but, doubtless, this was before their state policy had detected the politicians in mask. When some of his followers had dared to do what he had only thought, he appears to have forsaken them. They reproached him for this left-handed policy, some of the boldest of them declaring that they had neither acted nor written anything but what was warranted by his principles. I do not know many political ejaculations more affecting than that of Henry Barrow, said to have been a dissipated youth, when Cartwright refused, before Barrow's execution, to allow of a conference. The deluded man, after a deep sigh, said: "Shall I be thus forsaken by him? Was it not he that brought me first into these briars? and will he now leave me in the same? Was it not from him alone that I took my grounds? Or did I not, out of such premises as he pleased to give me, infer those propositions, and deduce those conclusions, for which I am now kept in these bonds?" He was soon after executed, with others.

Then occurred one of those political spectacles at which the simple-minded stare, and the politic smile; when, after the most cruel civil war of words †, Cartwright wrote very compliant letters to his old rival, Whitgift, now Archbishop of Canterbury; while the Archbishop was pleading with the Queen, in favour of the inveterate Republican, declaring that had Cartwright not so far engaged himself in the beginning, he thought he would have been, latterly, drawn into conformity. To clear up this mysterious conduct, we must observe that Cartwright seems to have graduated his political ambition to the degree the government touched, of weakness or of strength; and besides, he was now growing prudent as he was growing rich. For it seems, that he who was for scrambling for the church revenues, telling the people that the Apostles, *silver and gold they had none*, was himself "feeding too fair and fat," for the meagre

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a life, it ought to be offered for such a cause." Another of this faction is for "registering the names of the fittest and hottest brethren, without lingering for Parliament;" and another exults, that "there are a hundred thousand hands ready." Another, that "we may overthrow the bishops and all the government in one day."—Such was the style, and such the confidence in the plans which the lowest orders of revolutionists promulgated during their transient exhibition in this country. More in this strain may be found in Maddox's vindication against Neale, the advocate for the Puritans, p. 255; and in an admirable letter of that great politician, Sir Francis Walsingham, who, with many others of the ministers of Elizabeth, was a favourer of the Puritans, till he detected their secret object, to subvert the government. This letter is preserved in Collier's Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. 607. They had begun to divide the whole country into *classes*, provincial synods, &c. They kept registers, which recorded all the heads of their debates, to be finally transmitted to the secret head of the *Classis* of Warwick, where Cartwright governed, as *the perpetual moderator! Heylin's Hist. of Presbyt.* p. 277. These violent advocates for the freedom of the Press had, however, an evident intention to monopolise it; for they decreed that "no book should be put in print but by consent of the *Classes*."—Sir G. Paul's *Life of Whitgift*, p. 65. The very Star-Chamber they justly protested against, they were for raising among themselves!

* Under the denomination of *Barrowists* and *Brownists*. I find Sir Walter Raleigh declaring, in the House of Commons, on a motion for reducing disloyal subjects, that "they are worthy to be rooted out of a Commonwealth. He is alarmed at the danger, for it is to be feared, that men not guilty will be included in the law about to be passed. I am sorry for it. I am afraid there is near twenty thousand of them in England; and when they be gone (that is, expelled) who shall maintain their wives and children?"—Sir Simon D'Ewes's *Journal*, p. 517.

† The controversies of Whitgift and Cartwright were of a nature which could never close, for toleration was a notion which never occurred to either. These rivals, from early days, wrote with such bitterness against each other, that at length it produced mutual reproaches. Whitgift complains to Cartwright: "If you were writing against the veriest Papist, or the ignorantest dolt, you could not be more spiteful and malicious." And Cartwright replies: "If peace had been so precious unto you as you pretend, you would not have brought so many hard words and bitter reproaches, as it were sticks and coals, to double and treble the heat of contention."

After this, it is curious, even to those accustomed to such speculations, to observe some men changing with the times, and furious rivals converted into brothers. Whitgift, whom Elizabeth, as a mark of her favour, called "her black husband," soliciting Cartwright's pardon from the Queen; and the proud Presbyter Cartwright styling Whitgift his Lord the Archbishop's Grace of Canterbury, and visiting him!

groaning state of a pretended reformation. He had early in life studied that part of the law, by which he had learned the marketable price of landed property; and as the cask still retains its old flavour, this despiser of bishops was still making the best interest for his money by land-jobbing *.

One of the memorable effects of this attempted innovation was, that continued stream of libels which ran throughout the nation, under the portentous name of Martin Mar-prelate. This extraordinary personage, in his collective form, for he is to be splitted into more than one, long terrified Church and State. He walked about the kingdom invisibly, dropping here a libel, and there a proclamation for sedition; but wherever *Martinism* was found, *Martin* was not. He prided himself in what he calls "Pistling the Bishops." Sometimes he hints to his pursuers how they may catch him, for he prints, "within two furlongs of a bouncing priest," or "in Europe;" while he acquaints his friends who were so often uneasy for his safety, that "he has neither wife nor child," and prays "they may not be anxious for him, for he wishes that his head might not go to the grave in peace."—"I come, with the rope about my neck, to save you, howsoever it goeth with me." His press is interrupted, he is silent, and Lambeth seems to breathe in peace. But he has "a son; nay, five hundred sons!" and *Martin Junior* starts up! He inquires

"Where his father is; he who had studied the art of pistle-making? Why has he been tonguetied these four or five months? Good Nuncles (the bishops), have you closely murthered the gentleman in some of your prisons? Have you choaked him with a fat prebend or two? I I trow my father will swallow down no such pills, for he would thus soon purge away all the conscience he hath. Do you mean to have the keeping of him? What need that? he hath five hundred sons in the land. My father would be sorry to put you to any such cost as you intend to be at with him. A meaner house, and less strength than the Tower, the Fleet, or Newgate, would serve him well enough. He is not of that ambitious vein that many of his brethren the bishops are, in seeking for more costly houses than ever his father built for him."

This same "Martin Junior," who, though he is but young, as he says, "has a pretty smattering gift in this pistle-making; and I fear, in a while, I shall take a pride in it." He had picked up beside a bush, where it had dropped from somebody, an imperfect paper of his father's:—

"Theses Martinianæ—set forth as an afterbirth of the noble gentleman himselfe, by a pretty stripling of his, Martin Junior, and dedicated by him to his good nuncka, Maister John Canterbury (i. e. Canterbury). Printed without a sly priviledge of the Cater Caps"—(i. e. the square caps the bishops wore).

But another of these five hundred sons, who declares himself to be his "reverend and elder brother, heir to the renowned *Martin Mar-Prelate* the Great," publishes

"The just Censure and Reproof of Martin Junior; where, lest the Springall should be utterly discouraged in his good meaning, you shall finde that he is not bereaved of his due commendation."

Martin Senior, after finding fault with *Martin Junior* for "his rash and indiscreet headiness," notwithstanding, agrees with everything he had said. He confirms all, and cheers him; but charges him,

"Should he meet their father in the street, never to ask his blessing, but walke smoothly and circumspectly; and if anie offer to talk with thee of Martin, talke thou straite of the voyage into Portugal, or of the happie death of the Duke of Guise, or some such accident; but meddle not with thy father. Only, if thou have gathered anie thing in visitation for thy father, intreate him to signify, in some secret printed pistle, where a will have it lefte. I feare least some of us should fall into John Canterburie's hand."

Such were the mysterious personages who, for a long time, haunted the palaces of the bishops

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* Sir George Paul, a contemporary, attributes his wealth "to the benevolence and bounty of his followers." Dr. Sutcliffe, one of his adversaries, sharply upbraids him, that "in the persecution he perpetually complained of, he was grown rich." A Puritan advocate reproves Dr. Sutcliffe for always carping at Cartwright's purchases:—"Why may not Cartwright sell the lands he had from his father, and buy others with the money, as well as some of the bishops, who by bribery, simony, extortion, racking of rents, wasting of woods, and such-like stratagems, wax rich, and purchased great lordships for their posterity?"

To this Sutcliffe replied:

"I do not carpe alway, no, nor once, at Master Cartwright's purchase. I hinder him not; I envy him not. Only thus much I must tell him, that Thomas Cartwright, a man that hath more landes of his own in possession than any bishop that I know, and that fareth daintily every day, and feedeth fayre and fatte, and lyeth as soft as any tenderling of that brood, and hath wonne much wealth in short time, and will leave more to his posterity than any bishop, should not cry out either of persecution, or of excess of bishops' livinges."—SUTCLIFFE'S *Answer to certain calumnious Petitions.*

and the vicarages of the clergy, disappearing at the moment they were suddenly perceived to be near. Their slanders were not only coarse buffooneries, but the hottest effusions of hatred, with an unparalleled invective of nicknames*. Levelled at the bishops, even the natural defects, the personal infirmities, the domestic privacies, much more the tyranny of these now "petty popes," now "bouncing priests," now "terrible priests," were the inexhaustible subjects of these popular invectives †. Those "pillars of the state" were now called "its caterpillars;" and the inferior clergy, who perhaps were not always friendly to their superiors, yet dreaded this new race of inno-

* Cartwright approved of them, and well knew the concealed writers, who frequently consulted him: this appears by Sir G. Paul's Life of Whitgift, p. 65. Being asked his opinion of such books, he said, that "since the bishops, and others there touched, would not amend by grave books, it was therefore meet they should be dealt withal to their farther reproach; and that some books must be *earnest*, some *more mild and temperate*, whereby they may be both of the spirit of Elias and Eliseus:" the one the great mocker, the other the more solemn reprover. It must be confessed, Cartwright here discovers a deep knowledge of human nature. He knew the power of ridicule and of invective. At a later day, a writer of the same stamp, in "The Second Wash, or the *Moore* scoured *once more*," (written against Dr. Henry More, the Platonist,) in defence of that vocabulary of *names* which he has poured on More, asserts it is a practice allowed by the high authority of Christ himself. I transcribe the curious passage:—"It is the practice of Christ himself to character *men* by those *things* to which they assimilate. Thus hath he called *Herod* a *fox; Judas*, a *devil; false pastors* he calls *wolves;* the *buyers and sellers*, *theeves;* and those Hebrew Puritans the *Pharisees*, *hypocrites*. This rule and justice of his Master, St. Paul hath well observed, and he acts freely thereby; for when he reproves the Cretians, he makes use of that ignominious proverb, *Evil beasts and slow bellies*. When the high-priest commanded the Jews to *smite* him on the face, he replied to him, not without some bitterness, *God shall smite thee, thou white wall*. I cite not these places to justify an injurious spleen, but to argue the liberty of the truth."—*The Second Wash, or the* Moore *scoured once* more. 1651. P. 8.

† One of their works is "A Dialogue, wherein is laid open the tyrannical dealing of L. Bishopps against God's children." It is full of scurrilous stories, probably brought together by two active cobblers who were so useful to their junto. Yet the bishops of that day were not of dissolute manners; and the accusations are such, that it only proves their willingness to raise charges against them. Of one bishop they tell us, that after declaring he was poor, and what expenses he had been at, as Paul's church could bear witness, shortly after hanged four of his servants for having robbed him of a considerable sum. Of another, who cut down all the woods at Hampstead, till the towns-women "fell a swaddling of his men," and so saved Hampstead by their resolution. But when *Martin* would give a proof that the bishop of London was one of the bishops of the devil, in his "Pistle to the terrible Priests," he tells this story:—"When the bishop throws his bowl (as he useth it commonly upon the sabbath-day), he runnes after it; and if it be too harde, he cries *Rub! rub! rub! the diuel goe with thee!* and he goeth himself with it; so that by these words he names himself the Bishop of the Divel, and by his tirannical practise prooveth himselfe to be." He tells, too, of a parson well known, who, being in the pulpit, and "hearing his dog cry, he out with this text: 'Why, how now, hoe! can you not let my dog alone there? Come, Springe! come, Springe!' and whistled the dog to the pulpit." One of their chief objects of attack was Cooper, Bishop of Lincoln, a laborious student, but married to a dissolute woman, whom the university of Oxford offered to separate from him: but he said he knew his infirmity, and could not live without his wife, and was tender on the point of divorce. He had a greater misfortune than even this loose woman about him—his *name* could be punned on; and this bishop may be placed among that unlucky class of authors who have fallen victims to their *names*. Shenstone meant more than he expressed, when he thanked God that he could not be punned on. Mar-Prelate, besides many cruel hits at Bishop Cooper's wife, was now always "making the *Cooper's hoops to flye off*, and the bishop's tubs to leake out." In "The Protestatyon of Martin Marprelat," where he tells of two bishops "who so contended in throwing down elmes, as if the wager had bene, whether of them should most have impoverished their bishopricks. Yet I blame not *Mar-Elme* so much as Cooper for this fact, because it is no less given him by his *name* to spoil elmes, than it is allowed him by the secret judgment of God to mar the church. A man of *Cooper's* age and occupation, so wel seene in that trade, might easily knowe that tubs made of green timber must needs leak out; and yet I do not so greatly marvel, for he that makes no conscience to be a deceiver in the building of the churche, will not stick for his game to be a *deceitfull workeman* in

vators, were distinguished as "halting neutrals." These invectives were well farced for the gross taste of the multitude; and even the jargon of the lowest of the populace affected, and perhaps the coarse malignity of two *cobblers* who were connected with the party, often enlivened the satirical page. The *Martin Mar-Prelate* productions are not, however, effusions of genius; they were addressed to the coarser passions of mankind, their hatred and contempt. The authors were grave men, but who affected to gain over the populace with a popular familiarity*. In vain

making of tubbs." P. 19. The author of the books against Bishop Cooper is said to have been Job Throckmorton, a learned man, affecting raillery and humour to court the mob.

Such was the strain of ribaldry and malice which Martin Mar-Prelate indulged, and by which he obtained full possession of the minds of the people for a considerable time. His libels were translated, and have been often quoted by the Roman Catholics abroad and at home for their particular purposes, just as the revolutionary publications in this country have been concluded abroad to be the general sentiments of the people of England; and thus our factions always will serve the interests of our enemies. Martin seems to have written little verse; but there is one epigram worth preserving for its bitterness.

Martin Senior, in his "Reproofe of Martin Junior," complains that "his younger brother has not taken a little paines in ryming with *Mar-Martin* (one of their poetical antagonists), that the Cater-Caps may know how the meanest of my father's sonnes is able to answeare them both at blunt and sharpe." He then gives his younger brother a specimen of what he is hereafter to do. He attributes the satire of *Mar-Martin* to Dr. Bridges, dean of Sarum, and John Whitgift, archbishop of Canterbury.

"The first rising, generation, and original of *Mar-Martin.*

"From Sarum came a goos's egg,
With specks and spots bepatched;
A priest of Lambeth coucht thereon,
Thus was *Mar-Martin* hatched.

Whence hath *Mar-Martin* all his wit,
But from that egge of Sarum?
The rest comes all from great Sir John,
Who rings us all this 'larum.

What can the cockatrice hatch up
But serpents like himselfe?
What sees the ape within the glasse
But a deformed elfe?

Then must *Mar-Martin* have some smell
Of forge, or else of fire:
A sotte in wit, a beaste in minde,
For so was damme and sire."

* It would, however, appear, that these revolutionary publications reached the universities, and probably fermented "the green heads" of our students, as the following grave admonition directed to them evidently proves:—

"Anti-Martinus sive monitio cujusdam Londinensis ad adolescentes vtrimque academiæ contra personatum quendam rabulam qui se Anglicè Martin Marprelat, &c. Londini, 1589, 4°."

A popular favourite as he was, yet even Martin, *in propria persona*, acknowledges that his manner was not approved of by *either party*. His "Theses Martinianæ" opens thus: "I see my doings and my course misliked of many, both the good and the bad; though also I have favourers of both sortes. The bishops and their traine, though they stumble at the cause, yet especially mislike my maner of writing. Those whom foolishly men call *Puritanes*, like of the matter I have handled, but the forme they cannot brooke. So that herein I have them both for mine adversaries. But now what if I should take the course in certain theses or conclusions, without *inveighing* against either *person* or *cause.*" This was probably written after Martin had swallowed some of his own sauce, or taken his "Pap (offered to him) with a Hatchet," as one of the most celebrated government pamphlets is entitled. But these "Theses Martinianæ," without either scurrility or invective are the dullest things imaginable; abstract propositions were not palatable to the multitude; and then it was, after the trial had been made, that *Martin Junior and Senior* attempted to revive the spirit of the old gentleman; but, if sedition has its progress, it has also its decline; and if it could not strike its blow when strongest, it only puled and made grimaces, prognostics of weakness and dissolution. This is admirably touched in "Pappe with an Hatchet." "Now Old Martin appeared, with a wit worn into the socket, twingling and pinking like the snuffe of a candle; *quantum mutatus ab illo*, how unlike the knave he was before, not for malice, but for sharpnesse! The hogshead was even come to the hauncing, and nothing could be drawne from him but dregs; yet the emptie caske sounds lowder than when it was full, and protests more in his waining than he could performe in his waxing. I drew neere the sillie soul, whom I found quivering in two sheets of protestation paper (alluding to the work mentioned here in the following note). O how meager and leane he looked, so crest falne that

the startled bishops remonstrated: they were supposed to be criminals, and were little attended to as their own advocates. Besides, they were solemn admonishers, and the mob are composed of laughers and scorners.

The Court-party did not succeed more happily when they persecuted Martin, broke up his presses, and imprisoned his assistants. Never did sedition travel so fast, nor conceal itself so closely; for they employed a moveable press; and, as soon as it was surmised that Martin was in Surrey, it was found he was removed to Northamptonshire, while the next account came that he was showing his head in Warwickshire. And long they invisibly conveyed themselves, till in Lancashire the snake was scotched, by the Earl of Derby, with all its little brood*.

These pamphlets were "speedily dispersed and greedily read," not only by the people,—they had readers and even patrons among persons of condition. They were found in the corners of chambers at Court; and when a prohibition issued that no person should carry about them any of the Mar-prelate pamphlets on pain of punishment, the Earl of Essex observed to the Queen, "What then is to become of me?" drawing one of these pamphlets out of his bosom and presenting it to her.

The Martinists were better counteracted by the Wits, in some extraordinary effusions, prodigal of humour and invective. Wit and raillery were happily exercised against these masked divines; for the gaiety of the Wits was not foreign to their feelings. The Mar-prelates showed merry faces, but it was with a sardonic grin they had swallowed the convulsing herb; they horridly laughed against their will—at bottom all was gloom and despair. The extraordinary style of their pamphlets, concocted in the basest language of the populace,

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his combe hung downe to his bill; and had I not been sure it was the picture of Envie, I should have sworn it had been the image of Death: so like the verie anatomie of Mischief, that one might see through all the ribbes of his conscience."

In another rare pamphlet from the same school, "Pasquill of England to Martin Junior, in a countercuffe given to Martin Junior," he humorously threatens to write "The Owle's Almanack, wherein your night labours be set down;" and "some fruitful volumes of 'The Lives of the Saints,' which, maugre your father's five hundred sons, shall be printed," with "hays, jiggs, and roundelays, and madrigals, serving for epitaphs for his father's hearse."

* Some of these works still bear evident marks that the "pursuivants" were hunting the printers. "The Protestatyon of Martin Mar-prelate, wherein, notwithstanding the surprising of the printer, he maketh it knowne vnto the world that he feareth neither proud priest, tirannous prelate, nor godlesse cater-cap; but defieth all the race of them," including "a challenge" to meet them personally, was probably one of their latest efforts. The printing and the orthography show all the imperfections of that haste in which they were forced to print this work. As they lost their strength, they were getting more venomous. Among the little Martins disturbed in the hour of parturition, but already christened, there were: "Episto Mastix;" "The Lives and Doings of English Popes;" "Itinerarium, or Visitations;" "Lambethisms." The "Itinerary" was a survey of every clergyman of England! and served as a model to a similar work, which appeared during the time of the Commonwealth. The "Lambethisms" were secrets divulged by Martin; who, it seems, had got into the palace itself! Their productions were, probably, often got up in haste, in utter scorn of the Horatian precept.

As a great curiosity, I preserve a fragment in the *Scottish* dialect, which well describes them and their views. The title is wanting in the only copy I have seen; but its extreme rarity is not its only value: there is something venerable in the criticism, and poignant in the political sarcasm.

"Weil lettred clarkis endite their warkes, quoth Horace, slow and geasoun,
Bot thou can wise forth buike by buike, at every spurt and seasoun;
For men of litrature t' endite so fast, them doth not fitte,
Enanter in them, as in thee, their pen outrun thair witte.
The shaftis of foolis are soone shot out, but fro the merke they stray;
So art thou glibbe to guibe and taunte, but rouest all the way,
Quhen thou hast parbrackt out thy gorge, and shot out all thy arrowes,
See that thou hold thy clacke, and hang thy quiver on the gallows,
Els Clarkis will soon all be Sir Johns, the priestis craft will empaire,
And Dickin, Jackin, Tom, and Hob, mon sit in Rabbies chaire.
Let Georg and Nichlas, cheek by jol, bothe still on cock-horse yode,
That dignitie of Pristis with thee may han a long abode.
Els Litrature mon spredde her wings, and piercing welkin bright,
To Heaven, from whence she did first wend, retire and take her flight."

might have originated less from design than from the impotence of the writers. Grave and learned persons have often found to their cost that wit and humour must spring from the soil, no art of man can plant them there. With such this play and grace of the intellect can never be the movements of their nature, but its convulsions.

Father Martin and his two sons received "'A sound Boxe of the Eare,' in 'a Pistle' to 'the father and the two sonnes, Huffe, Ruffe, and Snuffe, the three tame ruffians of the Church, who take pepper in the nose because they cannot marre Prelates grating," when they once met with an adversary who openly declared,

"I profess rayling, and think it is as good a cudgel for a Martin as a stone for a dogge, or a whip for an ape, or poison for a rat. Who would curry an ass with an ivory comb? Give this beast thistles for provender. I doe but yet angle with a silken flie, to see whether Martins will nibble, and if I see that, why then I have wormes for the nonce, and will give them line enough, like a trowte, till they swallow both hooke and line, and then, Martin, beware your gills, for I'll make you daunce at the pole's end.

"Fill thy answer as full of lies as of lines, swell like a toade, hiss like an adder, bite like a dog, and chatter like a monkey, my pen is prepared, and my mind; and if you chaunce to find anie worse words than you broughte, let them be put in your Dad's dictionarie. Farewell, and be hanged; and I pray God you fare no worse.—Your's at an hour's warning."

This was the proper way to reply to such writers, by driving them out of the field with their own implements of warfare. "Pasquill of England*" admirably observed of the papers of this faction, "Doubt not but that the same reckoning in the ende will be made of you which your favourers commonly make of their old shooes; when they are past wearing they barter them awaie for newe broomes, or carrie them forth to the dunghill and leave them there." The writers of these Martin Mar-prelate books have been tolerably ascertained†, considering the secrecy with which they were printed; sometimes at night, sometimes hid in cellars, and never long in one place; besides the artifices used in their dispersion, by motley personages, held together by an invisible chain of confederacy. Conspiracy, like other misery, "acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows;" and the present confederacy combined persons of the most various descriptions, and perhaps of very opposite views. I find men of learning, and of rigid lives, intimately associated with dissipated, or with too ardently-tempered youths; connected, too, with maniacs, whose lunacy had taken a revolutionary turn; and men of rank combining with old women and cobblers‡. Such are the party-coloured apostles

* "Pasquill of England to Martin Junior, in a countercuffe given to Martin Junior."

† "Most of the books under Martin's name were composed by John Penry, John Udall, John Field, and Job Throckmorton, who all concurred in making Martin. See Answer to Throgmorton's Letter by Sutcliffe, p. 70; 'More Work for a Cooper;' and 'Hey, any Work for a Cooper;' and 'Some layd open in his Colours;' were composed by Job Throckmorton." *MS. Note by Thomas Baker.*—Udall, indeed, denied having any concern in these invectives, and professed to disapprove of them. We see Cartwright, however, of quite a different opinion. In Udall's library, some MS. Notes had been seen by a person who considered them as materials for a Martin Mar-prelate work in embryo, which Udall confessed was written "by a friend." All the writers were silenced Ministers; though, it is not improbable, that their scandalous tales, and much of the ribaldry, might have been contributed by their lowest retainers, those purveyors for the mob, of what they lately chose to call their "Pigs-meat."

‡ The execution of Hacket, and condemnation of his party, who had declared him "King of Europe," so that England was only a province to him, is noted in our General History of England. This was the first serious blow which alarmed the Puritanic party. Doubtless, this man was a mere maniac, and his ferocious passions broke out early in life; but, in that day, they permitted no lunacy as a plea for any politician. Cartwright held an intercourse with that party, as he had with Barrow, said to have been a debauched youth; yet we had a sect of Barrowists; and Robert Brown, the founder of another sect, named after him *Brownists*; which became very formidable. This Brown, for his relationship, was patronised by Cecil, Earl of Burleigh. He was a man of violent passions. He had a wife, with whom he never lived, and a church, wherein he never preached, observes the characterising Fuller, who knew him, when Fuller was young. In one of the pamphlets of the time I have seen, it is mentioned, that being reproached with beating his wife, he replied, "I do not beat Mrs. Brown as my wife, but as a curst cross old woman." He closed his life in prison; not for his opinions, but for his brutality to a constable. The old women, and the cobblers connected with these Martin Mar-prelates, are noticed in the burlesque epitaphs on Martin's death, supposed to be made by his favourites; a humorous appendix to "Martin's Monthminde." Few political conspiracies, whenever religion forms a pretext, is without a woman. One Dame Lawson is dis-

of insurrection! and thus their honourable and dishonourable motives lie so blended together, that the historian cannot separate them. At the moment the haughty spirit of a conspirator is striking at the head of established authority, he is himself crouching to the basest intimates; and to escape, often, from an ideal degradation, he can bear with a real one.

Of the heads of this party, I shall notice Penry and Udall, two self-devoted victims to Non-conformity. The most active was John Penry, of *Ap Henry*. He exulted that "he was born and bred in the mountains of Wales:" he had, however, studied at both our universities. He had all the heat of his soil, and of his party. He "wished that his head might not go down to the grave in peace," and was just the man to obtain his purpose. When he and his papers were at length seized, Penry pleaded that he could not be tried for sedition, professing unbounded loyalty to the Queen: such is the usual plea of even violent Reformers. Yet how could Elizabeth be the sovereign, unless she adopted the mode of government planned by these Reformers? In defence of his papers, he declared that they were only the private memorandums of a scholar, in which during his wanderings about the kingdom, he had collected all the objections he had heard against the government. Yet these, though written down might not be his own. He observed, that they were not even English, nor intelligible to his accusers; but a few Welshisms could not save Ap Henry; and the judge, assuming the hardy position, that *scribere est agere*, the author found more honour conferred on his MSS. than his genius cared to receive. It was this very principle which proved so fatal, at a later period, to a more elevated politician than Penry; yet Algernon Sidney, perhaps, possessed not a spirit more Roman[*]

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tinguished, changing her "silke for sacke;" and other names might be added of ladies. Two cobblers are particularly noticed, as some of the industrious purveyors of sedition through the kingdom; Cliffe, the cobbler, and one Newman. Cliffe's epitaph, on his friend Martin, is not without humour:—

"Adieu, both naule and bristles now for euer;
The shoe and soale—Ah, woe is me!—must sever.
Bewaile, mine awle, thy sharpest point is gone;
My bristle's broke, and I am left alone.
Farewell old shoes, thumb-stall, and clouting-leather;
Martin is gone, and we undone together."

Nor is Newman, the other cobbler, less mortified and pathetic. "The London Corresponding Society" had a more ancient origin than that sodality was aware.

"My hope once was, my old shoes should be sticht;
My thumbs ygilt, that were before bepicht:
Now Martin's gone, and laid full deep in ground,
My gentry's lost, before it could be found."

Among the Martin Mar-prelate books was one entitled "The Cobbler's Book." This I have not seen; but these cobblers probably picked up intelligence for these scandalous chronicles. The writers, too, condescended to intersperse the cant-dialect of the populace, with which the cobblers doubtless assisted these learned men, when busied in their buffoonery. Hence all their vulgar gibberish; the Shibboleth of the numerous class of their admirers; such as, "O whose *tat*?" John *Kan*kerbury, for Canterbury; *Paltri*-politans, for Metropolitans; *See Villains*, for Civilians; and Doctor of *Devility*, for Divinity! and more of this stamp. Who could imagine that the writers of these scurrilities were learned men, and that their patrons were men of rank! We find two knights heavily fined for secreting these books in their cellars. But it is the nature of rebellion to unite the two extremes; for *want* stirs the populace to rise, and *excess* the higher orders. This idea is admirably expressed in one of our elder poets:—

"Want made them murmur; for the people, who
To get their bread, do wrestle with their fate,
Or those, who in superfluous riot flow,
Soonest rebel. Convulsions in a State,
Like those which natural bodies do oppress,
Rise from repletion, or from emptiness."

ALEYNE'S *Henry VII.*

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* The writer of Algernon Sidney's Memoirs could not have known this fact, or he would not have said that "this was the first indictment of high treason upon which any man lost his life, for *writing anything, without publishing it.*" Edit. 1751, p. 21. It is curious to have Sidney's own opinion on this point. We discover this on his trial. He gives it, assuming one of his own noble principles, not likely to have been allowed by the wretched Tories of that day. Addressing the villanous Jeffries, the Lord Chief Justice: "My lord, I think it is *a right of mankind, and 'tis exercised by all studious men*, to write, in their own closets, what they please, for their own memory; and no man can be answerable for it, unless they publish it."—Jeffries replied: "Pray don't go away with *that right of mankind*, that it is lawful for me to write what I will in my own closet, so I do not publish it. We must not endure men to talk thus, that by the *right of nature* every man may contrive mischief in his

State-necessity claimed another victim; and this ardent young man, whose execution had been at first unexpectedly postponed, was suddenly hurried from his dinner to a temporary gallows; a circumstance marked by its cruelty, but designed to prevent an expected tumult *.

Contrasted with this fiery Mar-prelate, was another, the learned subtile John Udall. His was the spirit which dared to do all that Penry had dared, yet conducting himself in the heat of action with the tempered wariness of age: "If they silence me as a minister," said he, "it will allow me leisure to write; and then I will give the bishops such a blow as shall make their hearts ache." It was agreed among the party neither to deny, or to confess, writing any of their books, lest among the suspected the real author might thus be discovered, or forced solemnly to deny his own work; and when the bishop of Rochester, to catch Udall by surprise, suddenly said, "Let me ask you a question concerning your book," the wary Udall replied, "It is not yet proved to be mine!" He adroitly explained away the offending passages the lawyers picked out of his book, and in a contest between him and the judge, not only repelled him with his own arms, but when his lordship would have wrestled on points of divinity, Udall expertly perplexed the lawyer, by showing he had committed an anachronism of four hundred years! He was equally acute with the witnesses; for, when one deposed that he had seen a catalogue of Udall's library, in which was inserted "The Demonstration of Discipline," the anonymous book for which Udall was prosecuted, with great ingenuity he observed, that this was rather an argument that he was not the author, for "scholars use not to put their own books in the catalogue of those they have in their study." We observe with astonishment the tyrannical decrees of our courts of justice, which lasted till the happy Revolution. The bench was as depraved in their notions of the rights of the subject in the reign of Elizabeth, as in those of Charles II. and James II. The Court refused to hear Udall's witnesses, on this strange principle, that "witnesses in favour of the prisoner were against the queen!" To which Udall replied, "It is for the queen to hear all things, when the life of any of her subjects is in question." The criminal felt what was just more than his judges; and yet the judge, though to be reprobated for his mode, calling so learned a man "Sirrah!" was right in the thing, when he declared that "you would bring the queen and the crown under your girdles." It is remarkable, that Udall repeatedly employed that expression which Algernon Sidney left as his last legacy to the people, when he told them he was about to

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own chamber, and is not to be punished till he thinks fit to be called to it."—Jeffries was a profligate sophist, but his talents were as great as his vices.

* Penry's unfinished petition, which he designed to have presented to the Queen before the trial, is a bold and energetic composition! his protestation, after the trial, a pathetic prayer! Neale has preserved both in his History of the Puritans. With what simplicity of eloquence he remonstrates on the temporising government of Elizabeth. He thus addresses the Queen, under the title of Madam:—"Your standing is, and has been, by the Gospel: it is little beholden to you, for anything that appears. The practice of your government shows, that if you could have ruled without the Gospel, it would have been doubtful whether the Gospel should be established or not; for now that you are established in your throne by the Gospel, you suffer it to reach no farther than the end of your sceptre limiteth unto it."—Of a milder, and more melancholy cast, is the touching language, when the hope of life, but not the firmness of his cause, had deserted him. "I look not to live this week to an end. I never took myself for a rebuker, much less for a reformer of states and kingdoms. I never did anything in this cause for contention, vain-glory, or to draw disciples after me. Great things, in this life, I never sought for: sufficiency I had, with great outward trouble; but most content I was with my lot, and content with my untimely death, though I leave behind me a friendless widow and four infants."—Such is often the pathetic cry of the simple-hearted, who fall the victims to the political views of more designing heads.

We could hardly have imagined that this eloquent and serious young man was that Martin Mar-prelate who so long played the political ape before the populace, with all the mummery of their low buffoonery, and even mimicking their own idioms. The populace, however, seems to have been divided in their opinions respecting the sanity of his politics, as appears by some ludicrous lines, made on Penry's death, by a northern rhymer.

"The Welshman is hanged,
Who at our kirke flanged,
And at the state banged,
And brened are his buks.
And though he be hanged,
Yet he is not wranged;
The de'il has him fanged
In his kruked kluks."

—WEEVER'S *Funerall Monuments*, p. 56. Edit. 1631.

die for "that *Old Cause* in which I was from my youth engaged." Udall perpetually insisted on "*The Cause.*" This was a term which served at least for a watch-word: it rallied the scattered members of the republican party. The precision of the expression might have been difficult to ascertain; and, perhaps, like every popular expedient, varied with "existing circumstances." I did not, however, know it had so remote an origin as in the reign of Elizabeth; and suspect it may still be freshened up, and varnished over, for any present occasion.

The last stroke for Udall's character is the history of his condemnation. He suffered the cruel mockery of a pardon granted conditionally, by the intercession of the Scottish monarch, but never signed by the Queen—and Udall mouldered away the remnant of his days in a rigid imprisonment*.

* Observe what different conclusions are drawn from the same fact by opposite writers. Heylin, arguing that Udall had been justly condemned, adds, "the man remained a *living monument* of the archbishop's extraordinary goodness to him in the preserving of that life which by the law he had forfeited." But Neale, on the same point, considers him as one who "died for his conscience, and stands upon record *as a monument* of the oppression and cruelty of the government." All this opposition of feeling is of the nature of party-spirit: but what is more curious in the history of human nature, is the change of opinion in the same family, in the course of the same generation. The son of this Udall was as great a zealot for Conformity, and as great a sufferer for it from his father's party, when they possessed political power. This son would not submit to their oaths and covenants, but, with his bedridden wife, was left unmercifully to perish in the open streets.—WALKER'S *Sufferings of the Clergy*, part ii. p. 178.

Cartwright and Travers, the chief movers of this faction, retreated with haste and caution from the victims they had conducted to the place of execution, while they themselves sunk into a quiet forgetfulness and selfish repose.

SUPPLEMENT

TO

MARTIN MAR-PRELATE.

As a literary curiosity, I shall preserve a very rare poetical tract, which describes with considerable force the Revolutionists of the reign of Elizabeth. They are indeed those of wild democracy: and the subject of this satire will, I fear, be never out of time. It is an admirable political satire against a mob-government. In our poetical history, this specimen too is curious, for it will show that the stanza in alternate rhymes, usually denominated Elegiac, is adapted to very opposite themes. The solemnity of the versification is impressive, and the satire equally dignified and keen.

The taste of the mere modern reader had been more gratified by omitting some unequal passages; but, after deliberation, I found that so short a composition would be injured by dismembering extracts. I have distinguished by italics the lines to which I desire the reader's attention, and have added a few notes to clear up some passages which might appear obscure.

RYTHMES

AGAINST MARTIN MARRE-PRELATE*.

Ordo Sacerdotum fatuo turbatur ab omni,
Labitur et passim Religionis honos.

Sincke Reason, *Martin*, cannot stay thy pen,
We 'il see what rime will do; have at thee then!

A Dizard late skipt out upon our stage,
But in a sacke, that no man might him see;
And though we know not yet the paltrie page,
Himselfe hath *Martin* made his name to bee.
A proper name, and for his feates most fit;
The only thing wherein he hath shew'd wit.

Who knoweth not, that Apes, men *Martins* call,†
Which beast, this baggage seemes as 't were himselfe:
So as both nature, nurture, name, and all,
Of that's expressed in this apish elfe.
Which Ile make good to Martin Marre-als face,
In three plaine poynts, and will not bate an ace.

For, first, *the Ape delights with moppes and mowes,*
And mocketh Prince and Peasants all alike;
This jesting Jacke, that no good manners knowes,
With his Asse-heeles presumes all states to strike.
Whose scoffes so stinking in each nose doth smell,
As all mouthes saie of Dolts he beares the bell.

Sometimes his chappes do walke in poynts too high,
Wherein the Ape himself a Woodcock tries.
Sometimes with floutes he drawes his mouth awrie,
And sweares by his ten bones, and falselie lies.
Wherefore be what he will I do not passe;
He is the paltriest Ape that euer was.

Such fleering, leering, jeering fooles bopeepe,
Such hahas! teehees! weehees! wild colts play;
Such Sohoes! whoopes and hallowes; hold and keepe;
Such rangings, ragings, reuelings, roysters ray;
With so foule mouth, and knaue at euery catch,
'Tis some knaue's nest did surely *Martin* hatch.

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* In Herbert's Typog. Antiq. p. 1689, this tract is intituled, "A Whip for an Ape, or Martin displaied." I have also seen the poem with this title. Readers were then often invited to an old book by a change of title: in some cases I think the same work has been published with several titles.

† *Martin* was a name for a *bird*, and a cant term for an *Ass*; and, as it appears here, an *Ape*. Our *Martins*, considered as birds, were often reminded that their proper food was "hempen seed," which at length choked them. That it meant an *Ass*, appears from "Pappe with a Hatchet." "Be thou Martin the bird or Martin the beast, a bird with the longest bill, or a *beast with the longest ears*, there's a net spread for your neck." Sign. B. 5. There is an old French proverb, quoted by Cotgrave, voce Martin: "*Plus d'un* ASNE *à la foire, a nom* Martin."

Now out he runnes with Cuckowe king of May,
Then in he leapes with a wild Morrice daunce:
Then strikes he up *Dame Lawsen's** lustie lay;
Then comes Sir *Jeffries* ale-tub, tapp'd by chaunce,
Which makes me gesse, and I can shrewdly smell,
He loues both t' one and t'other passing well.

Then straight, as though he were distracted quite,
He chafeth like a cut-purse layde in warde;
And rudely railes with all his maine and might,
Against both knights and lords without regard:
So as *Bridewell* must tame his dronken fits,
And *Bedlem* help to bring him to his wits.

But, *Martin*, why, in matters of such weight,
Doest thou thus *play the dawe, and dauncing foole?*
O sir (quoth he) *this is a pleasant baite*
For men of sorts, to traine them to my schoole.
Ye noble states, how can you like hereof,
A shamelesse Ape at your sage head should scoffe?

Good Noddie, now leaue scribbling in such matters;
They are no tooles for fooles to tend unto;
Wise men regard not what mad monkies patters!
'Twere trim a beast should teach men what to do.
Now *Tarleton's* dead, the consort lackes a Vice.
For knaue and foole thou maist bear prick and price.

The sacred sect, and perfect pure precise,
Whose cause must be by *Scoggin's* jests maintenide,
Ye shewe, although that Purple, Apes disguise,
Yet Apes are still, and so must be, disdainde.
For though your Lyons lookes weake eyes escapes,
Your babling bookes bewraies you all for Apes.

The next point is, *Apes use to tosse and teare*
What once their fidling fingers fasten on;
And clime aloft, and cast downe euery where,
And neuer staies till all that stands be gon!
Now whether this in *Martin* be not true,
You wiser heads marke here what doth ensue.

What is it not that *Martin* doth not rent?
Cappes, tippets, gownes, black chiuers, rotchets white;
Communion bookes, and homelies: yea, so bent
To teare, as women's wimples feele his spite.
Thus tearing all, as all apes use to doo,
He teares withall the Church of Christ in two.

Marke now what thinges he meanes to tumble downe,
For to this poynt to look is worth the while,
In one that makes no choice 'twixt cap and crowne,
Cathedrall churches he would fain untile,
And snatch up bishops' lands, and catch away
All gaine of learning for his prouling pray.

And thinke you not he will pull downe at length
As well the top from tower as cocke from steeple;
And when his head hath gotten some more strength,
To play with Prince as now he doth with People:
Yes, he that now saith, Why should Bishops bee?
Will next crie out, *Why Kings? The Saincts are free!*

The Germaine boores with Clergiemen began,
But neuer left till Prince and Peeres were dead.
Jacke Leyden was a holy zealous man,
But ceast not till the Crowne was on his head.
And *Martin's* mate, *Jacke Strawe*, would alwaies ring
The Clergie's faults, but sought to kill the King.

"Oh that," quoth *Martin*, "*chwere* a Nobleman†!"
Avaunt, vile villain! 'tis not for such swads.
And of the Counsell, too: marke Princes then:
These roomes are raught at by these lustie lads.
For Apes must climbe, and neuer stay their wit,
Untill on top of highest hilles they sit.

What meane they els, in euerie towne to craue
There Priest and King like Christ himself to be:
And for one Pope ten thousand Popes to haue,
And to controll the highest he or she?
Aske Scotland that, whose King so long they crost,
As he was like his kingdome to haue lost.

Beware ye States and Nobles of this lande,
The Clergie is but one of these men's buttes.
The Ape at last on master's necke will standa:
Then gegge betimes these gaping greedie guts.
Least that too soone, and then too late ye feele,
He strikes at head that first began with heele.

The third tricke is, *what Apes by flattering waies*
Cannot come by with biting, they will snatch;
Our *Martin* makes no bones, but plainely saies,
Their fists shall walke, they will both bite and scratch.

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* Martin was a *protégé* of this *Dame Lawson*. There appear to have been few political conspiracies without a woman, whenever religion forms a part. This dame is thus noticed in the mock Epitaphs on Martin's funeral:

"Away with silk, for I will mourn in sacke;
Martin is dead, our new sect goes to wrack.
Come, gossips mine, put finger in the eie,
He made us laugh, but now must make us crie."

DAME LAWSON.

"Sir Jeffrie's ale-tub" alludes to two knights, who were ruinously fined, and hardly escaped with life, for their patronage of Martin.

† *Chwere*, i. e. "that I were," alluding to their frequently adopting the corrupt phraseology of the populace, to catch the ears of the mob.

He'll make their hearts to ake, and will not faile,
*Where pen cannot, their penknife shall prevail**.

But this is false, he saith he did but mock:
A foole he was, that so his words did scanne.
He only meant with pen their pates to knocke;
A knaue he is, that so turns cat in pan.
But, *Martin*, sweare and stare as deepe as hell,
Thy sprite, thy spite and mischeuous minde doth tell.

The thing that neither Pope with booke nor bull,
Nor Spanish King with ships could doe without,
Our MARTINS *heere at home will worke at full:*
If Prince curbe not betimes that rabble rout.
That is, destroy both Church and State and all;
For if t' one faile, the other needes must fall.

Thou England, then, whom God doth make so glad
Through Gospel's grace and Prince's prudent reigne,
Take heede least thou at last be made as sad,
Through *Martin's* makebates marring, to thy paine.
For he marrs all and maketh nought, nor will,
Saue lies and strife, and works for *England's* ill.

And ye graue men that answere MARTIN'S *mowes,*
He mocks the more, and you in vain loose times.
Leaue Apes to Doggs to baite, their skins to Crowes,
And let old *Lanam*† lashe him with his rimes.
The beast is proud when men his enditings;
Let his workes goe the waie of all wast writings.

Now, *Martin*, you that say you will spawne out
Your brawling brattes, in euery towne to dwell,
We will prouide in each place for your route,
A bell and whippe that Apes do loue so well.
And if yo skippe, and will not wey the checke,
We 'il haue a springe, and catch you by the necke.

And so adieu, mad *Martin*-mar-the-land
Leaue off thy worke, and "more work"‡ hearest thou me;
Thy work's nought worth, take better worke in hand.
Thou marr'st thy worke, and thy work will marre thee.
Worke not anewe, least it doth work thy wracke,
And then make worke for him that worke doth lacke.

And this I warn thee, Martin's Monckies-face,
Take heed of me; my rime doth charm thee bad.
I am a rimer of the Irish race,
And haue alreadie rimde thee staring mad.
But if thou cease not thy bald jests to spread,
I'le never leave till I have rimde thee dead.

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* It is a singular coincidence, that Arnauld, in his caustic retort on the Jesuits, said, "I do not fear your *pen*, but your *penknife*." The play on the words tells even better in our language than in the original—*plume* and *canif*.

† I know of only one *Laneham*, who wrote "A Narrative of the Queen's Visit at Kenilworth Castle, 1575." He was probably a redoubtable satirist. I do not find his name in Ritson's *Bibliographia Poetica*.

‡ Alluding to the title of one of their most virulent libels against Bishop Cooper. "More work for a Cooper." Cooper, in his admonition to the people of England, had justly observed, that this *Mar-Prelate* ought to have many other names. "The author calleth himself by a famed name, *Martin Mar-Prelate*; a very fit name, undoubtedly; but if this outrageous spirit of boldness be not stopped speedily, I fear he will prove himself to be not only *Mar-Prelate*, but *Mar-Prince*, *Mar-State*, *Mar-Law*, *Mar-Magistrate*, all together, until he bring it to an equalitie."

I will close this note with an extract from "Pappe with a Hatchet," which illustrates the ill effects of all sudden reforms, by an apposite and original image.

"There was an aged man, that lived in a well-ordered Commonwealth, by the space of threescore years, and finding, at the length, that by the heate of some men's braines, and the warmness of other men's blood, that newe alterations were in hammering, and that it grewe to such an height, that all the desperate and discontented persons were readie to runne their heads against their head; comming into the midst of these mutiners, cried, as loude as his yeeres would allow:—'Springalls, and vnripened youthes, whose wisedomes are yet in the blade, when this snowe shall be melted (laying his hand on his siluer haires) then shall you find store of dust, *and rather wish for the continuance of a long frost, than the incomming of an vntimely thaw.*'"—*Sig. D. 3. verso.*

LITERARY QUARRELS

FROM

PERSONAL MOTIVES.

Anecdote of a BISHOP and a DOCTOR—Dr. MIDDLETON and Dr. BENTLEY—WARBURTON and Dr. TAYLOR—WARBURTON and EDWARDS—SWIFT and DRYDEN—POPE and BENTLEY—why fiction is necessary for satire, according to Lord ROCHESTER'S confession—ROWE and ADDISON—POPE and ATTERBURY—Sir JOHN HAWKINS and GEORGE STEEVENS—a fierce controversial author a dangerous neighbour—a ludicrous instance of a literary quarrel from personal motives between BOHUN and the WYKEHAMISTS.

LITERARY QUARRELS have abundantly sprung from mere personal motives; and controversies purely literary, sometimes of magnitude, have broken out, and been voluminously carried on, till the public are themselves involved in the contest, while the true origin lies concealed in some sudden squabble; some neglect of petty civility; some unlucky epithet; or some casual observation dropped without much consideration, which mortified or enraged the author. How greatly has passion prevailed in literary history! How often the most glorious pages in the chronicles of literature are tainted with the secret history which must be placed by their side, so that the origin of many considerable works, which do so much honour to the heads of their authors, sadly accuse their hearts. But the heaven of Virgil was disturbed with quarrels—

"Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?"
Æneid.

"Can heavenly minds such high resentment show?" *Dryden.*

And has not a profound observer of human affairs declared, *Ex privatis odiis respublica crescit?* individual hatreds aggrandize the republic. This miserable philosophy will satisfy those who are content, from private vices, to derive public benefits. One wishes for a purer morality, and a more noble inspiration.

To a literary quarrel from personal motives, we owe the origin of a very remarkable volume. When Dr. Parr delivered his memorable sermon, which, besides the "*sesquipedalia verba*," was perhaps the longest that ever was heard—if not listened to, Bishop Hurd, who had always played the part of one of the most wary of politicians in private life, and who had occasion once adroitly to explain the French word *Retenue*, which no man better understood, in a singularly unguarded moment, sarcastically observed that he did not like "the doctor's long vernacular sermon." The happy epithet was soon conveyed to the classical ear of the modern Grecian: it was a wasp in it! The bishop had, in the days of literary adventure, published some pieces of irony, which were thought more creditable to his wit than his feelings—and his great patron, Warburton, certain juvenile prose and verse—all which they had rejected from their works. But this it is to be an author!—his errors remain when he has outlived and corrected them. The mighty and vindictive Grecian in rage collected them all; exhausted his own genius in perpetuating follies; completed the works of the two bishops in utter spite; and in "Tracts by Warburton and a Warburtonian," has furnished posterity with a specimen of the force of his own "vernacular" style, giving a lesson to the wary bishop, who had scarcely ever wanted one all his life—of the dangers of an unlucky epithet!

Dr. Conyers Middleton, the author of the life of Cicero, seldom wrote but out of pique; and he probably owed his origin as an author to a circum-

stance of this nature. Middleton when young was a *Dilettante* in music; and Dr. Bentley in contempt applied the epithet "fiddling Conyers." Had the irascible Middleton broken his violin about the head of the learned Grecian, and thus terminated the quarrel, the epithet had then cost Bentley's honour much less than it afterwards did. It seems to have excited Middleton to deeper studies, which the great Bentley not long after felt, when he published proposals for an edition of the New Testament in Greek. Middleton published his "Remarks, paragraph by paragraph, upon the proposals," to show that Bentley had neither talents nor materials proper for the work. This opened a great paper-war, and again our rabid wolf fastened on the majestic lion, "paragraph by paragraph." And though the lion did affect to bear in contempt the fangs of his little active enemy, the flesh was torn. "The proposals" sunk before "the paragraph by paragraph," and no edition of the Greek Testament by Bentley ever appeared. Bentley's proposals at first had met with the greatest success; the subscription-money amounted to two thousand pounds, and it was known that his nephew had been employed by him to travel abroad to collect these MSS. He declared he would make use of no MS. that was not a thousand years old, or above, of which sort he had collected twenty, so that they made up a total of twenty thousand years. He was four years studying them before he issued his proposals. The Doctor rested most on eight Greek MSS., the most recent of which was one thousand years old. All this wore a very imposing appearance. At a touch the whole magnificent edifice fell to pieces! Middleton says, "His twenty old MSS. shrink at once to eight, and he is forced again to own that even of these eight there are only four which had not been used by Dr. Mill;" and these, Middleton, by his sarcastic reasoning, at last reduces to "some pieces only of the New Testament in MS." So that twenty MSS. and their twenty thousand years, were battered by the "fiddling Conyers" into a solitary fragment of little value! Bentley returned the subscription-money, and would not publish; the work still lies in its prepared state, and some good judges of its value have expressed a hope to see it yet published. But Bentley himself was not untainted in this dishonourable quarrel: he well knew that Middleton was the author of this severe attack; but to show his contempt of the real author, and desirous, in his turn, of venting his disappointment on a Dr. Colbatch, he chose to attribute it to him, and fell on Colbatch with a virulence that made the reply perfectly libellous, if it was Bentley's, as was believed.

The irascibility of Middleton, disguising itself in a literary form, was still more manifested by a fact recorded of him by Bishop Newton. He had applied to Sir Robert Walpole for the mastership of the Charter-house, who honestly informed him that Bishop Sherlock with the other Bishops were against his being chosen. Middleton attributed the origin of this opposition to Bishop Sherlock, and wreaked his vengeance by publishing his "Animadversions upon Sherlock's Discourses on Prophecy." The book had been long published, and had passed through successive editions; but Middleton pretended he had never seen them before, and from this time Lambeth-house was a strong provocative for his vindictive temper.

Nor was the other great adversary of Middleton, he who so long affected to be the lord paramount, the Suzerain in the feudal empire, rather than the republic of letters—Warburton himself, less easily led on to these murderous acts of personal rancour. A pamphlet of the day has preserved an anecdote of this kind. Dr. Taylor, the Chancellor of Lincoln, once threw out in company an opinion derogatory to the scholarship of Warburton, who seems to have had always some choice spirits of his legion as spies in the camp of an enemy, and who sought their tyrant's grace by their violation of the social compact. The tyrant himself had an openness, quite in contrast with the dark underworks of his satellites. He boldly interrogated our critic, and Taylor replied, undauntedly and more poignantly than Warburton might have suspected, that "he did not recollect ever *saying* that Dr. Warburton was no scholar, but that indeed he had always *thought* so." To this intrepid spirit the world owes one of the remarkable prefaces to the Divine Legation — in which the Chancellor of Lincoln, intrepid as he was, stands like a man of straw, to be buffeted and tossed about with all those arts of distortion which the wit and virulence of Warburton almost every day was practising at his "established places of execution," as his prefaces and notes have been wittily termed.

Even Warburton himself, who committed so many personal injuries, has, in his turn, most eminently suffered from the same motive. The personal animosity of a most ingenious man was the real cause of the utter destruction of Warburton's critical reputation. Edwards, the author of the "Canons of Criticism," when young and in the army, was a visitor at Allen's of Prior-Park, the patron of Warburton; and in those literary conversations which usually occupied their evenings, Warburton affected to show his superiority in his acquaintance with the Greek writers, never suspecting that a red coat covered more Greek than his own—which happened unluckily to be the case. Once, Edwards in the library, taking down a Greek author, explained a passage in a manner which did not suit probably with some new theory

of the great inventor of so many; a contest arose, in which Edwards discovered how Warburton came by his illegitimate knowledge of Greek authors: Edwards attempted to convince him that he really did not understand Greek, and that his knowledge, such as it was, was derived from French translations—a provoking act of literary kindness, which took place in the presence of Ralph Allen and his niece, who, though they could not stand as umpires, did as witnesses. An incurable breach took place between the parties, and from this trifling altercation, Edwards produced the bitter "Canons of Criticism," and Warburton those foaming notes in the Dunciad.

Such is the implacable nature of literary irascibility! Men so tenderly alive to intellectual sensibility, find even the lightest touch profoundly enter into the morbid constitution of the literary temper; and even minds of a more robust nature have given proof of a sickly delicacy hanging about them quite unsuspected. Swift is a remarkable instance of this kind: the foundation of the character of this great wit, was his excellent sense. Yet having, when young, composed one of the wild Pindarics of the time, addressed to the Athenian Society, and Dryden judiciously observing that "cousin Jonathan would never be a poet," the enraged wit, after he had reached the maturity of his own admirable judgment, and must have been well aware of the truth of the friendly prediction, could never forgive it. He has indulged the utmost licentiousness of personal rancour; he even puns miserably on his name to degrade him as the *emptiest* of writers. His spirited translation of Virgil, which was admired even by Pope, he levels by the most grotesque sarcastic images to mark the poet's diminutive genius—he says this version-maker is so lost in Virgil, that he is like "the lady in a lobster; a mouse under a canopy of state; a shrivelled beau within the penthouse of a full-bottomed perriwig." He never was generous enough to contradict his opinion, and persisted in it to the last.—Some critic, about Swift's own time, astonished at his treatment of Dryden, declares he must have been biassed by some prejudice—the anecdote here recorded, not then probably known, discovers it.

What happened to Pope on the publication of his Homer shows all the anxious temper of the author. Being in company with Bentley, the poet was very desirous of obtaining the doctor's opinion on it, which Bentley contrived to parry as well as he could; but in these matters an author who calculates on a compliment, will risk everything to obtain it. The question was more plainly put, and the answer was as plainly given. Bentley declared that "the verses were good verses, but the work is not Homer—it is Spondanus!" From this interview posterity derives from the mortified poet the full-length figure of "*the slashing* Bentley" in the fourth book of the Dunciad;

> "The mighty Scholiast, whose unwearied pains
> Made Horace dull, and humbled Milton's strains."

When Bentley was told by some officious friend that Pope had abused him, he only replied, "Ay, like enough! I spoke against his Homer, and the *portentous owl* never forgives!" Part of Pope's severe criticism only is true; but to give full effect to their severity, poets always infuse a certain quantity of fiction. This is an artifice absolutely necessary to practise; so I collect from a great master in the arts of satire, and who once honestly avowed, that no satire could be composed, unless it was *personal*; and no personalities would sufficiently adorn a poem, without *lies*. This great satirist was Rochester. Burnet details a curious conversation between himself and his lordship on this subject. The bishop tells us that "he would often go into the country, and be for some months wholly employed in study, or the sallies of his wit, chiefly directed to satire. And this he often defended to me, by saying, there were some people that could not be kept in order, or admonished but in this way." Burnet remonstrated, and Rochester replied—"A man could not write with life, unless he were *heated by revenge*; for to make a satire without resentments, upon the cold notions of philosophy, was as if a man would, in cold blood, cut men's throats who had never offended him. And he said, the *lies* in these libels came often in as *ornaments*, that could not be spared without *spoiling the beauty* of the poem." It is as useful to know how the materials of satire are put together; as thus the secret of pulling it to pieces more readily, may sometimes be obtained.

These facts will sufficiently establish this disgraceful principle of the personal motives which have influenced the quarrels of authors, and which they have only disguised, by giving them a literary form. Those who are conversant in literary history can tell how many works, and some considerable ones, have entirely sprung out of the vengeance of authors. Johnson, to whom the feelings of the race were so well known, has made a curious observation, which none but an author could have made:—"The best advice to authors would be, that they should keep out of the way of one another." He says this in the Life of Rowe, on the occasion of Addison's Observations on Rowe's Character. Rowe had expressed his happiness to Pope at Addison's promotion; and Pope, who wished to conciliate Addison towards Rowe, mentioned it, adding, that he believed Rowe was sincere. Addison replied, "That he

did not suspect Rowe feigned; but *the levity of his heart is such, that he is struck with any new adventure:* and it would affect him just in the same manner as if he heard I was going to be hanged." Warburton adds, that Pope said he could not deny but Addison understood Rowe well. Such is the fact, on which Johnson throws out an admirable observation:—"This censure time has not left us the power of confirming or refuting; but observation daily shows that much stress is not to be laid on hyperbolical accusations and pointed sentences, which even he that utters them desires to be applauded, rather than credited. Addison can hardly be supposed to have meant all that he said. *Few characters can bear the microscopic scrutiny of* WIT *quickened by* ANGER." I could heap up facts to demonstrate this severe truth. Even of Pope's best friends, some of their severities, if they ever reached him, must have given the pain he often inflicted. His friend Atterbury, to whom he was so partial, dropped an expression, in the heat of conversation, which Pope could never have forgiven; that our poet had "a crooked mind in a crooked body." There was a rumour, after Pope's death, that he had left behind him a satirical Life of Dean Swift. Let genius, whose faculty detects the foibles of a brother, remember he is a rival, and be a generous one. In that extraordinary morsel of literary history, the Conversations of Ben Jonson with his friend Drummond of Hawthornden, preserving his opinions of his contemporaries, if I err not in my recollection, I believe that he has not spoken favourably of a single individual!

The personal motives of an author, influencing his literary conduct, have induced him to practise meannesses and subterfuges. One remarkable instance of this nature is that of Sir John Hawkins, who indeed had been hardly used by the caustic pleasantries of George Steevens. Sir John, in his edition of Johnson, with ingenious malice, contrived to suppress the acknowledgment made by Johnson to Steevens, of his diligence and sagacity, at the close of his preface to Shakespeare. To preserve the panegyric of Steevens, mortified Hawkins beyond endurance; yet, to suppress it openly, his character as an editor did not permit. In this dilemma, he pretended he reprinted the preface from the edition of 1765; which, as it appeared before Johnson's acquaintance with Steevens, could not contain the tender passage. However, this was unluckily discovered to be only a subterfuge, to get rid of the offensive panegyric. On examination, it proved not true: Hawkins did not reprint from this early edition, but from the latest, for all the corrections are inserted in his own. "If Sir John were to be tried at Hicks's Hall (long the seat of that justice's glory), he would be found guilty of *clipping*," archly remarks the periodical critic.

A fierce controversial author may become a dangerous neighbour to another author: a petulant fellow, who does not write, may be a pestilent one; but he who prints a book against us may disturb our life in endless anxieties. There was once a dean who actually teazed to death his bishop, wore him out in journeys to London, and at length drained all his faculties—by a literary quarrel from personal motives.

Dr. THOMAS PIERCE, Dean of Sarum,—a perpetual controversialist, and to whom it was dangerous to refuse a request, lest it might raise a controversy,—wanted a prebend of Dr. WARD, Bishop of Salisbury, for his son Robert. He was refused; and now, studying revenge, he opened a controversy with the bishop, maintaining that the king had the right of bestowing all dignities, in all cathedrals in the kingdom, and not the bishops. This required a reply from the bishop, who had been formerly an active controversialist himself. Dean Pierce renewed his attack with a folio volume, entitled "A Vindication of the King's Sovereign Right," &c., 1683.—Thus it proceeded, and the web thickened around the bishop, in replies and rejoinders. It cost him many tedious journeys to London, through bad roads, fretting at "the King's Sovereign Right" all the way; and, in the words of a witness, "in unseasonable times and weather, that by degrees his spirits were exhausted, his memory quite gone, and he was totally unfitted for business*." Such was the fatal disturbance occasioned by Dean Pierce's folio of "the King's Sovereign Right," and his son Bob being left without a prebend!

I shall close this article with a very ludicrous instance of a literary quarrel from personal motives. This piece of secret history had been certainly lost, had not Bishop Lowth condescended to preserve it, considering it as necessary to assign a sufficient reason for the extraordinary libel it produced.

Bohun, an antiquarian lawyer, in a work entitled "The English Lawyer," in 1732, in illustrating the origin of the Act of *Scandalum Magnatum*, which arose in the time of William of Wykeham, the chancellor and bishop of Edward III. and the founder of New College, in Oxford, took that opportunity of committing the very crime on the venerable manes of Wykeham himself. He has painted this great man in the darkest colours. Wykeham is charged with having introduced "Alice Piers, his niece or," &c. for the truth is,

* Lansdown MSS. 1042—1316.

he was uncertain who she was, to use his peculiar language, "into the king's bosom;" to have joined her in excluding the Black Prince from all power in the state; and he hints at this hero having been poisoned by them; of Wykeham's embezzling a million of the public money, and, when chancellor, of forging an Act of Parliament to indemnify himself, and thus passing his own pardon. It is a singularity in this libellous romance, that the contrary of all this only is true. But Bohun has so artfully interwoven his historical patches of misrepresentations, surmises, and fictions, that he succeeded in framing an historical libel.

Not satisfied with this vile tissue, in his own obscure volume, seven years afterwards, being the editor of a work of high reputation, Nathaniel Bacon's "Historical and Political Discourse of the Laws and Government of England," he further satiated his frenzy, by contriving to preserve his libel in a work which he was aware would outlive his own.

Whence all this persevering malignity? Why this quarrel of Mr. Bohun, of the Middle Temple, with the long-departed William of Wykeham?

"What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?"

He took all these obscure pains, and was moved with this perpetual rancour against William of Wykeham, merely to mortify the Wykehamists; and slandered their founder, with the idea that the odium might be reflected on New College. Bohun, it seems, had a quarrel with them concerning a lease, on which he had advanced money; but the holder had contrived to assign it to the well-known Eustace Budgell: the college confirmed the assignment. At an interview before the warden, high words had arisen between the parties: the warden withdrew; and the wit gradually shoved the antiquary off the end of the bench on which they were sitting: a blow was struck, and a cane broken. Bohun brought an action, and the Wykehamites travelled down to give bail at Westminster Hall, where the legal quarrel was dropped, and the literary one then began. Who could have imagined that the venerable bishop and chancellor of Edward III. was to be involved in a wretched squabble about a lease, with an antiquary and a wit? "Fancying," says Bishop Lowth, "he could inflict on the Society of New College a blow, which would affect them more sensibly by wounding the reputation of their founder, he set himself to collect everything he could meet with, that was capable of being represented to his discredit, and to improve it with new and horrible calumnies of his own invention." Thus originated this defamatory attack on the character of William of Wykeham! And by arts, which active writers may practise, and innocent readers cannot easily suspect, a work of the highest reputation, like that of Nathaniel Bacon's, may be converted into a vehicle of personal malignity; while the author himself disguises his real purpose under the specious appearance of literature! The present case, it must be acknowledged, is peculiar, where a dead person was attacked with a spirit of rancour, to which the living only appear subject; but the author was an antiquary, who lived as much with the dead as the living: his personal motive was the same as those already recorded, and here he was acting with a double force on the dead and the living!

But here I stop my hand, my list would else be too complete. Great names are omitted—Whitaker and Gibbon*; Pope and Lord Hervey†; Wood and South‡; Rowe, Mores, and Ames§; and George Steevens and Gough.

This chapter is not honourable to authors; but historians are only Lord Chief Justices, who must execute the laws, even on their intimate friends, when standing at the bar. The chapter is not honourable—but it may be useful; and that is a quality not less valuable to the public. It lets in their readers to a kind of knowledge, which opens a necessary comment on certain works, and enlarges our comprehension of their spirit.

If in the heat of controversy authors imprudently attack each other with personalities, they are only scattering mud, and hurling stones, and will incur the ridicule or the contempt of those who, unfriendly to the literary character, feel a secret pleasure in its degradation: but let them learn, that to open a literary controversy from mere personal motives; thus to conceal the dagger of private hatred under the mantle of literature; is an expedient of short duration, for the secret history is handed down with the book; and when once the dignity of the author's character sinks, in the meanness of his motives, powerful as the work may be, even Genius finds its lustre diminished, and Truth itself becomes suspicious.

* GIBBON'S *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. i. 243.
† WALPOLE'S *Memoirs*, vol. iii. 40.
‡ The Life of Wood, by GUTCH, vol. i.
§ NICHOLS'S *Literary Anecdotes*.

INDEX

TO

PERSONS TREATED OF, OR ALLUDED TO, IN QUARRELS OF AUTHORS.

A.

Addison, 161, 257, 258, 259, 314, 315
——— and Pope, 196—199
Æmilius Scaurus, 232
Aikenside, 161, 169, 172, 173, 174
Aikin, Dr., 191, 245
Aldrich, Dean, 230, 233, 234
Aleyne, 306
Alfarache, Guzman de, 219
Allen, Ralph, 160, 171, 314
Alsop, Dr., 231, 232
Anstis, 292, 295
Arbuthnot, 179, 181, 184, 191
Aristophanes, 172, 173, 212
Aristotle, 156, 208, 209, 213, 218, 219
Armstrong, 191
Arnall, an attorney, 158
Arnauld, M. 311
Ascham, 271
Atterbury, 181, 184, 233, 255, 258, 270, 271
Aubrey, 266, 268, 270, 273, 274, 277, 284, 285
Ayre, William, 193, 198

B.

Bacon, Lord, 153, 208, 219, 254, 264, 281
——— Nathaniel, 316
Baker, Henry, (*Microscope*) 224
——— Thomas, (*Reflections on Learning*) 209, 305
Balguy, Dr. 165, 177
Barber, Alderman, 206
Baron, 284
Barrow, Henry, 300
Bathurst, Allen, Earl, 167
——— Dr. Ralph, 239
Baxter, Richard, 266, 274, 281
Bayle, 153, 154, 163, 197, 218, 266, 267, 270
Bentley, Dr., 162, 169, 313, 314
——— and Boyle, 230, 237
——— Thomas, 182
Birch, Dr., 153, 165, 169, 174
Birkenhead, Sir John, 250, 253
Blackmore, Sir Richard, 236
Blackstone, Sir William, 196, 197
Blackwall, 245
Blackwell, 228
Blaew, 275
Blount, 261
——— Miss, 186
Bohun, the Lawyer, 315, 316
Boileau, 180, 183
Bolingbroke, Lord, 165, 167, 258, 266
——— Mallet, and Pope, 200—204
Booth, Barton, 176, 153
Boyle and Bentley, 230—237
——— Robert, 209, 211, 215, 219, 279, 281
Bramhall, Bp., 240, 269
Brereton, Sir William, 251
Bridges, Dean of Sarum, 303
Broderick, Sir Allen, 247
Brooke and Camden, 289—295
Brown (*founder of the Brownists*), 305
——— Dr. John. (*Characteristics*) 156, 177, 195
Browne, Sir William, 226
Brucker, 209
Buckingham, Duke of, 184, 206, 239
Budgell, Eustace, 316
Burgundy, Bastard of, 287
Burleigh, Cecil, Earl of, 305
Burlington, Earl of, 205
Burnet, Bp. 239, 243, 255, 257, 264, 314
Bute, Earl of, 223
Butler, (*Hudibras*) 163, 250, 260, 275
Byron, Lord, 245

C.

Cæsalpinus, 218
Calvin, 268, 297
Camden and Brooke, 289—295
Camden, 283, 284
Campanella, 216, 217, 219
Campbell, Dr. John, 275, 279
Cardan, 209
Caroline, Queen, 180
Cartwright, Thomas, 298, 301, 305
Cartwright, William, 181
Caryll, (*Job*) 238
Casaubon, Meric, 216
Charles II., 211, 215, 217, 219, 238, 239, 247, 264, 265, 268, 272, 273, 274
——— I., 281
Chaucer, 182
Chester, Charles, 285
Chesterfield, Lord, 202, 272
Chillingworth, 162
Churchill, the Satirist, 158, 160, 161, 162, 177
Cibber, Colley, 182, 183, 204, 206
——— Theophilus, 176
——— and Pope, 191—195
Clarendon, Lord, 154, 157, 247, 251, 252, 260, 262, 264, 265, 271, 272
Clarke, the Posture Master, 220
Clavel, the Bookseller, 238
Cleiveland, 250, 251
Cleland, 181
Cliffe, the Cobbler, 306
Colbatch, Dr., 312
Cole, W. of Milton, 169, 178
Collins, 266
Concanen, 161
Congreve, 163, 198
Cooke, (*Hesiod*, &c.) 181, 184
Cooper, John Gilbert, 176
Cooper, the Painter, 273
Cooper, Bishop of Lincoln, 302, 311
Copernicus, 218
Copleston, Dr. 209
Corbet, Bp., 284
Cosins, Bp., of Durham, 267

Cotgrave, 309
Cowley, 178, 217, 245, 246, 247, 275
Crofts, William, 247
Cromwell, 217, 240, 241, 242, 243, 255, 264, 265, 272, 281
——— H. 183, 186, 187, 188
——— R. 217, 265
Cross, Vicar of Great Chew, 212, 213
Crousaz, 167, 168
Cumberland, Mr. 154
Curll, Edmund, 181—198
—— and Pope, 186—189

D.

D'Avenant and a Club of Wits, 244, 249
Davies, Thomas, 184, 268
Decker and Jonson, 283—290
De Foe, Daniel, 185, 258
Delawar, Lord, 188
Denham, Sir John, 183, 245, 247, 249
Denmark, King of, 284
Dennis, the Critic, 182, 183, 197, 204, 205, 206
Derby, Earl of, 304
Descartes, 281
Devonshire, Earl of, 270, 272
——— Countess of, 272
D'Ewes, Sir Simon, 300
Dodd (*Church History*), 296
Doddridge, Dr., 169
Dodwell, Henry, 234
Donne, Dr., 247
Dorislaus, Dr., 270
Douce, Mr., 290
Downe, Lord, 186
Drummond of Hawthornden, 283, 315
Dryden, 160, 194, 207, 246, 256, 257, 285, 312, 314
Ducket, Colonel, 182
Dugdale, 293
Dunton, John, 257, 258
Duppa, M. R., 203
Dutens, M., 219
Dyson, Jeremiah, 169, 172

E.

Eachard, 162, 263, 268, 271
Earnley, Sir Michael, 251
Edward III., 315, 316
——— the Black Prince, 315
Edwards (*Canons of Criticism*), 153, 161, 164, 170, 171, 177, 313, 314
Egmont, Lord, 198
Elizabeth, Queen, 219, 296, 297, 299, 300, 307, 308
Erastus, 164
Estcourt, 259
Etherege, 239
Evans, Rice, or Arise! 159
Evelyn, 210, 211

F.

Fairfax, Lord, 251
Faithorne, the Engraver, 273
Farquhar, the Comic Writer, 205
Fell, Dr., 215
—— Bp., 269, 270
Fenton, (*Classics*), 228
Field, John, 305
Fielding, Henry, 224, 225, 226
Filmer, Sir Robert, 254, 269
Flecknoe, 304
Flying Post, Writer of, 257, 258
Francis, St. 219
Freind, Dr. John, 232, 233
——— Dr. Robert, 255
Folkes, Martin, 223, 224
Formey, 209
Frontinus, 180
Fuller, (*Worthies*), 253
——— Dr. (*Church History*), 296, 305

G.

Galileo, 281
Garrick, 203
Garth, 234, 237, 257
Gassendi, 267, 275, 281
Gay, 199, 204, 205
Gibbon, 162, 166, 221
Gifford, Mr., 285
Gilchrist, Mr. 285
Gildon, 197
Gillies, Dr. 209
Glanville, (*Witches*), 210, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 219
Glover, 202, 203
Godolphin, Francis, 272
Gordon, (*Tacitus*), 180, 181, 266
Gracchus, 214
Grævius, 232
Granger, 245
Grenville, Dr., 266, 267
Grey, Dr. Z. 168, 176
Gronovius, 176

H.

Hacket, William, 305
Halifax, Marquis of, 256
Hampton, Bess, 239
Hanmer, Sir Thomas, 160, 168, 169, 174, 178
Hardouin, Father, 163, 165
Harrington, (*Oceana*) 268, 269
Harrison, Colonel, 157
Harvey, Gabriel, 208
——— Richard, 208
——— (*Circulation of the Blood*), 218
Hawkins, Sir John, 200, 315
Hayley, 245
Haywood, Mrs. 185
Headley, 245
Heathcote, Dr., 177
Helvetius, 207, 272, 273
Henderson, Master, 253
Henley, Orator, 176, 222, 227
Henry VIII., 219, 268
Hervey, Lord, 180
Heylin, 298, 308
Hickeringill, 261
Hill, Aaron, 185
—— Hon. Lady, 223, 229
—— Sir John, with the Royal Society, Fielding, Smart, &c., 222, 229
Hoare, Sir Richard, 188
Hobbes, 164, 211, 212, 216, 244, 245, 247, 248, 249, 299
——— and his quarrels, 261—276
——— and Dr. Wallis, 277—282
Hogarth, 273
Hollis, Thomas, 278
Homer, Dr., 157
Hooke, Nathanael, 260
Hooker, 162
Horace, 234
Howard, Hon. Edward, 249
Howell, 247
Hume, 174, 191, 273, 275
Hurd, Bp., 154, 157, 159, 166, 167, 169, 170, 174, 175, 178, 245, 247
Hyde, the Orientalist, 174

I.J.

James II., 207, 240
——— I. of Scotland, 284
——— VI. ——— 308
Jacob, the Law-writer, 206
——— (*Lives of the Poets*), 183, 193, 205
Jeffries, Judge, 306, 307
Jersey, Lord, 257
———, Earl of, 187
Jervis, the Painter, 168

Johnson, Dr., 153, 154, 167, 170, 181, 183, 186, 187, 189, 191, 192, 195, 198, 199, 201, 202, 255, 285, 314, 315
Joly, 267, 271
Jones, Inigo, 285
Jonson, Ben, 169, 181, 315
——— and Decker, 283—290
Jortin, Dr., 159, 166, 167

K.

Kaimes, Lord, 172, 174
Keil, Professor, 235
Kennett, Bp. 255, 256
King, Dr., the Civilian, 204, 206
Kippis, Dr., 196, 220, 221, 224, 233, 234, 235
Knight, Dr. Gawin, 161
Knox, 245
——— the Reformer, 296

L.

Laneham, 311
Langbaine, 285
Lardner, Dr. 174
Lauder, 173, 255
Lauderdale, Earl of, 256
Lawson, Dame, 305, 310
Lee, Nat., 161
Leibnitz, 161, 162
Leicester, Earl of, 300
Leland, Antiquary, 292, 294
Leland, Dr. (*Demosthenes*) 158, 167, 174
L'Estrange, Sir Roger, 250, 261
Lewis, Pope's Bookseller, 180, 205
Leyden, Jack, 310
Lintot, Bernard, 189, 197
——— his Prices to Authors, 204, 206
Locke, 162, 254, 275
Loggan, the Engraver, 273
Lowth, Bp., 156, 157, 158, 150, 162, 165, 173, 174, 175, 195, 315, 316
Luther, 268

M.

Machiavel, 180, 265, 276
M'Mahon, T. O'Brien, 273
Maddox, Dr. 300
Mallet, 158, 160, 167, 176
——— Bolingbroke, and Pope, 200—204
Malone, Edmond, 161
Mandeville, 272
Marlborough, Duke of, Life of, 202, 203, 254
——— Sarah, Duchess of, 202, 203
Marston, 284
Marvell and Parker, 238—243
Marvell, 260, 261
Mason, 239
Maunsell, Andrew, 297
Maurice, Prince, 252
May, Thomas, 260
Menasseh, Ben Israel, 165
Mersenne, Father, 267
Middlesex, Lord, 181
Middleton, Dr. Conyers, 166, 169, 260, 312, 313
Milton, 153, 160, 161, 163, 214, 238, 241, 242, 243, 244, 254, 255, 268
Montague, Lady Mary Wortley, 182, 186
——— Duke of, 224
Montaigne, 256
Montrose, Duke of, 202
Moore, A. 202
More, Dr. Henry, 302
Morhoff, 215
Muleasses, King of Tunis, 240

N.

Neale, 298, 300, 307, 308
Needham, Marchmont, 250, 252
Newbery, Bookseller, 226
Newcastle, Marquess of, 251
Newman, the Cobler, 306
Newton, Bp., 245, 313
——— Sir Isaac, 225, 254
Nichols, Mr. 155, 164, 177, 182, 204, 206, 221
Norris, Dr., 197
North, Roger, 257
Norton, Colonel, 253
——— Mr., 186
Nottingham, Earl of, 258

O

Oldfield, Mrs. 198
Oldisworth, 284.
Oldys, 213, 284
Oliver, Dr., 174
Orange, Prince of, 257
Orford, Earl of, 257
Orrery, Lord, 233
Oxford, Earl of, 189
Ozell, 192, 204

P.

Parker and Marvell, 238—243
Parnell, 204, 205, 256
Parr, Dr. 156, 158, 166, 178
Patin, Guy, 261
Paul, Sir George, 298, 300, 301, 302
Peard, George, 252
Pembroke, Philip, Earl of, 284
Penry, John, 305, 306, 307
Percy, Bp., 258
Peters, Rev. Mr. 174
Philips, Ambrose, 180, 182, 190, 197
——— John, 255
Pierce, Dean of Sarum, 315
Piers, Alice, 315
Pike, 281
Pilkington, Mrs. 189
Pooklington, Dr. 271
Pope, 157, 160, 161, 165, 167, 168, 171, 173, 175, 177, 204, 207, 209, 225, 231, 233, 254, 257, 259, 282, 314, 315
—— and his Miscellaneous Quarrels, 179—185
—— and Curll, 186—189
—— and Cibber, 190—195
—— and Addison, 196—199
—— Mallet, and Bolingbroke, 200—204
Prior, 57
Psalmanazar, 171
Puffendorff, 275
Pym, 252

Q.

Quintilian, 167

R.

Rabelais, Francis, 156
Raleigh, Sir W. 284, 285, 300
——— Jun., 284
Ralph, the Political Writer, 160
Rambouillet, Madame, 186
Randolph, Thomas, 238
Ranelagh, Lord, 223
Ray, the Naturalist, 220
Reed, Isaac, 209, 226
Rembrandt, 273
Richardson, Jonathan, Jun., 171, 183
Ridpath, 257, 259
Riolan, 218
Ritson, 295
Rivers, Woodville, Earl, 287
Rochefoucault, 272
Rochester, Earl of, 262, 314
——— Bp. of, 307
Rollin, 176
Rome, 206, 314
Roome, Edward, 179, 185
Roscommon, Earl of, 236

Rousseau, 207
Ruffhead, Owen, 165, 178, 185, 197, 201
Rupert, Prince, 253
Rymer, 233, 245

S.

Savage, 177, 181, 183, 184, 185
Scaliger, 176
Schioppius, 176
Scott, Walter, 153, 245
Sedgwick, John and Obadiah, 252
Selden, 164, 178, 266, 274, 297
Servetus, 218
Settle, Elkanah, 206, 207, 285
Sewell, 205
Shadwell, 207
Shaftesbury, Earl of, 254, 261, 262
——— ——— Lord (*Characteristics*), 172, 194, 273
Shakespeare, 247, 248
Shenstone, 302
Sherburn, Sir Edward, 233
Sheridan, Dr., 197
Sherlock, Bp., 313
Shippen, 256
Sidney, Algernon, 306, 307
Sloane, Sir Hans, 219, 220, 227
Smart, Christopher, 224, 226, 227, 238
Smith, Edmund, 206
Smyth, James Moore, 184
Socrates, 172, 173, 211
Sorbiere, 268, 272, 273
South, 211
Southey, 245
Spanheim, 239
Spelman, 260
Spence, 198
Spenser, 208
Spinosa, 172, 174, 266
Sprat, Bp., 209, 211, 214, 217, 219, 255
Staël, Madame de, 263, 267
Stebbing, Dr., 163, 174
Steele, Sir Richard, 197, 198, 199, 257, 258, 259
Steevens, George, 315
Sterne, 273
Stillingfleet, 162
Strahan, Bookseller, 205
Straw, Jack, 310
Strickland, Master, 253
Stubbe, Dr. Henry, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 221, 223, 268, 278
Suckling, 248
Sunderland, Countess of, 160
Sutcliffe, Dr 301, 305
Sutton, Sir Robert, 160
Swift, Dean, 162, 180, 181, 184, 196, 209, 233, 238, 257, 268, 272, 314, 315
Sykes, Dr., 175
Symmons, Dr. 255

T.

Tasso, 244
Taylor, (*Demosthenes*), 313
——— Henry, 159, 174, 178
——— Jeremy, 162
——— Dr. John, 174, 175
Temple, Sir William, 211, 218, 230, 231, 233, 235
Tenison, 282
Theobald, 161, 168, 169, 182, 184, 191, 204, 205, 206
Thomson, 202
Throckmorton, Job, 303, 308
Tickell, 197, 199
Tillard, 174, 175
Tindal, 266
Toland, 204, 206
Tonson, Bookseller, 206
Tovey, (*Angl. Jud.*) 257
Towne, Mr., 177
Trapp, 233
Travers, 299
Trenchard, 266
Turner, Dr., of Cambridge, 239
Tyers, Jonathan, 180, 186
Tyrwhitt, 168

U.

Udall, John, 305, 306, 307, 308
———, his son, 308
Urquhart, 156
Urray, Col., alias Hurrey, 251

V.

Valerius Maximus, 232
Vane, Sir Henry, 214
Varius Sucronensis, 232
Vernatti, Sir Philliberto, 211
Vertot, 260
Virgil, 165, 166
Voltaire, 159, 176, 254
Voiture, 186

W.

Wagstaff, Dr. 257, 258
Wakefield, Gilbert, 260
Walker, (*Sufferings of Clergy*), 308
Waller, Sir William, 251
———, 217, 245, 247, 270
Wallis, Dr. 265, 269, 272
——— and Hobbes, 277—282
Walpole, Sir Robert, 313
Walsingham, Sir Francis, 300
Walton, Isaac, 284
Warburton and his Quarrels, 153—178
——— 177, 185, 195, 197, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 233, 260, 266, 274, 299, 315
Ward, Bp. Seth, 270, 278, 281, 315
Warner (*Albion's England*), 298
Warton, Dr., 161, 171, 178, 179, 180, 186, 191, 197, 199, 289
———, Thomas, 255, 256, 295
Warwick, Earl of, 197
Webster, Dr. W., 175
Welsted, Leonard, 182, 184
Whiston, Bookseller, 228
White, a Catholic Priest, 274
Whitgift, 300, 303
Wilks, the Actor, 193
William III., 256
William of Wykeham, 315, 316
Wilmot, Lord, 251
Withers, George, 245
Wolfius, 268
Wood, Anthony, 214, 215, 238, 239, 240, 245, 254, 262, 269, 271, 274
Woodward, the Harlequin, 227
Woolston, 261
Worsdale, Painter, 189
Wotton, Dr. W., 211, 218, 220, 230, 234, 235, 236
Wotton, 164
Wycherley, 186

Y.

Young, 161, 181, 183, 206

END OF THE QUARRELS OF AUTHORS.

AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

LITERARY AND POLITICAL CHARACTER OF JAMES THE FIRST;

INCLUDING A SKETCH OF HIS AGE.

" The whole reign of James I. has been represented by a late celebrated pen (Burnet) to have been a continued course of mean practices; and others, who have professedly given an account of it, have filled their works with *libel* and *invective*, instead of *history*. Both King James and his ministers have met with a treatment from posterity highly unworthy of them, and those who have so liberally bestowed their censures were entirely ignorant of the true springs and causes of the actions they have undertaken to represent."—*Sawyer's Preface to Winwood's Memorials.*

" Il y auroit un excellent livre à faire sur les INJUSTICES, les OUBLIS, et les CALOMNIES HISTORIQUES."—*Madame de Genlis.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present inquiry originates in an affair of literary conscience. Many years ago I set off in the world with the popular notions of the character of James the First; but in the course of study, and with a more enlarged comprehension of the age, I was frequently struck by the contrast of his real with his apparent character; and I thought I had developed those hidden and involved causes which have so long influenced modern writers in ridiculing and vilifying this monarch.

This historical trifle is therefore neither a hasty decision, nor a designed inquiry; the results gradually arose through successive periods of time, and were it worth the while, the history of my thoughts, in my own publications might be arranged in a sort of chronological conviction*.

It would be a cowardly silence to shrink from encountering all that popular prejudice and party feeling may oppose; this were incompatible with that constant search after truth which we may at least expect from the retired student.

I had originally limited this Inquiry to the *literary* character of the monarch; but there was a secret connexion between that and his political conduct; and that again led me to examine the manners and temper of the times, with the effects which a peace of more than twenty years operated on the nation. I hope that the freshness of the materials, often drawn from contemporary writings which have never been published, may in some respect gratify curiosity. Of the *political* character of James the First, opposite tempers will form opposite opinions; the friends of peace and humanity will consider that the greatest happiness of the people is that of possessing a philosopher on the throne; let profounder inquirers hereafter discover why those princes are suspected of being but weak men, who are the true fathers of their people; let them too inform us, whether we are to ascribe to James the First, as well as to Marcus Antoninus, the disorders of their reign, or place them to the ingratitude and wantonness of mankind.

* I have described the progress of my opinions in "Curiosities of Literature," p. 170, 11th Ed.

AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

LITERARY AND POLITICAL CHARACTER OF JAMES THE FIRST;

INCLUDING A SKETCH OF HIS AGE.

If sometimes the learned entertain false opinions and traditionary prejudices, as well as the people, they however preserve among themselves a paramount love of truth, and the means to remove errors, which have escaped their scrutiny. The occasion of such errors may be complicate, but, usually, it is the arts and passions of the few which find an indolent acquiescence among the many, and firm adherents among those who so eagerly consent to what they do not dislike to hear.

A remarkable instance of this appears in the character of James the First which lies buried under a heap of ridicule and obloquy; yet James the First was a literary monarch at one of the great eras of English literature, and his contemporaries were far from suspecting that his talents were inconsiderable, even among those who had their reasons not to like him. The degradation which his literary character has suffered, has been inflicted by more recent hands; and it may startle the last echoer of Pope's "Pedant-reign" to hear that more wit and wisdom have been recorded of James the First than of any one of our sovereigns.

An "Author-Sovereign," as Lord Shaftesbury, in his anomalous but emphatic style, terms this class of writers, is placed between a double eminence of honours, and must incur the double perils; he will receive no favour from his brothers, the *Fainéants*, as a whole race of ciphers in succession on the throne of France were denominated, and who find it much more easy to despise than to acquire; while his other brothers, the republicans of literature, want a heart to admire the man who has resisted the perpetual seductions of a court-life for the silent labours of his closet. Yet if Alphonsus of Arragon be still a name endeared to us for his love of literature, and for that elegant testimony of his devotion to study expressed by the device on his banner of *an open book*, how much more ought we to be indulgent to the memory of a sovereign who has written one still worthy of being opened?

We must separate the literary from the political character of this monarch, and the qualities of his mind and temper from the ungracious and neglected manners of his personal one. And if we do not take a more familiar view of the events, the parties, and the genius of the times, the views and conduct of James the First will still remain imperfectly comprehended. In the reign of a prince who was no military character, we must busy ourselves at home; the events he regulated may be numerous and even interesting, although not those which make so much noise and show in the popular page of history, and escape us in its general views. The want of this sort of knowledge has proved to be one great source of the false judgments passed on this monarch. Surely it is not philosophical to decide of another age by the changes and the feelings through which our own has passed. There is a chronology of human opinions which, not observing, an indiscreet philosopher may commit an anachronism in reasoning.

When the Stuarts became the objects of popular indignation, a peculiar race of libels was eagerly dragged into light, assuming the imposing form of history; many of these state-libels did not even pass through the press, and may occasionally be discovered in their MS. state. Yet these publications cast no shade on the *talents* of James the First. His literary attainments were yet undisputed; they were echoing in the ear of the writers, and many proofs of his sagacity were still lively in their recollections.

THE FIRST MODERN ASSAILANTS OF THE CHARACTER OF JAMES THE FIRST.

Burnet, the ardent champion of a party so deeply concerned to oppose as well the persons as the principles of the Stuarts, levelled the father of the race; we read with delight pages which warm and hurry us on, mingling truths with rumours, and known with suggested events, with all the spirit of secret history. But the character of James I. was to pass through the lengthened inquisitorial tortures of the sullen sectarism of Harris*. It was branded by the fierce, remorseless republican Catharine Macaulay, and flouted by the light, sparkling whig Horace Walpole†. A senseless cry of pedantry had been raised against him by the eloquent invective of Bolingbroke, from whom doubtless Pope echoed it in verse, which has outlived his lordship's prose:—

"Oh, cried the goddess, for some pedant reign!
Some gentle James to bless the land again;
To stick the doctor's chair into the throne,
Give law to words, or war with words alone,
Senates and courts with Greek and Latin rule,
And turn the council to a grammar-school!"

Dunciad, book iv., ver. 175.

THE PEDANTRY OF JAMES THE FIRST.

Few of my readers, I suspect, but have long been persuaded that James I. was a mere college pedant, and that all his works, whatever they may be, are monstrous pedantic labours. Yet this monarch of all things detested pedantry, either as it shows itself in the mere form of Greek and Latin, or in ostentatious book-learning, or in the affectation of words of remote signification: these are the only points of view in which I have been taught to consider the meaning of the term

* The historical works of Dr. William Harris have been recently republished in a collected form, and they may now be considered as entering into our historical stores.

Harris is a curious researcher, but what appears more striking in his historical character, is the impartiality with which he quotes authorities which make against his own opinions and statements. Yet is Harris a writer likely to impose on many readers. He announces in his title-pages that his works are "after the manner of Mr. Bayle." This is but a literary imposition, for Harris is perhaps the meanest writer in our language both for style and philosophical thinking. The extraordinary impartiality he displays in his faithful quotations from writers on opposite sides, is only the more likely to deceive us; for by that unalterable party feeling which never forsakes him, the facts against him he studiously weakens by doubts, surmises, and suggestions; a character sinks to the level of his notions by a single stroke; and from the arguments adverse to his purpose, he wrests the most violent inferences. All party writers must submit to practise such mean and disingenuous arts if they affect to disguise themselves under a cover of impartiality. Bayle, intent on collecting facts, was indifferent to their results; but Harris is more intent on the deductions than the facts. The truth is, Harris wrote to please his patron, the republican Hollis, who supplied him with books, and every friendly aid. "It is possible for an ingenious man to be of a *party* without being *partial*," says Rushworth; an airy clench on the lips of a sober matter-of-fact man looks suspicious, and betrays the weak pang of a half-conscience.

† Horace Walpole's character of James I. in his "Royal Authors," is as remarkable as his character of Sir Philip Sidney; he might have written both without any acquaintance with the works he has so maliciously criticised. In his account of Sidney he had silently passed over the "Defence of Poetry;" and in his second edition he makes this insolent avowal, that "he had forgotten it; a proof that I at least did not think it sufficient foundation for so high a character as he acquired." Every reader of taste knows the falseness of the criticism, and how heartless the polished cynicism that could dare it. I repeat, what I have elsewhere said, that Horace Walpole had something in his composition more predominant than his wit,—a cold, unfeeling disposition which contemned all literary men, at the moment his heart secretly panted to partake of their fame.

Nothing can be more imposing than his volatile and caustic criticisms on the works of James I.; yet it appears to me that he had never opened that folio volume he so poignantly ridicules. For he doubts whether these two pieces, "The Prince's Cabala" and "The Duty of a King in his Royal Office," were genuine productions of James I. The truth is, they are both nothing more than extracts printed with those separate titles, drawn from the King's Basilicon Doron. He had probably neither read the extracts nor the original. Thus singularity of opinion, vivacity of ridicule, and polished epigrams in prose, were the means by which this noble writer startled the world by his paradoxes, and at length lived to be mortified at a reputation which he sported with and lost. I refer the reader to those extracts from his MS. letters which are in "Calamities of Authors," where he has made his literary confessions, and performs his act of penance.

pedantry, which is very indefinite, and always a relative one.

The age of James I. was a controversial age, of unsettled opinions and contested principles; an age, in which authority was considered as stronger than opinion; but the vigour of that age of genius was infused into their writings, and those citers, who thus perpetually crowded their margins, were profound and original thinkers. When the learning of a preceding age becomes less recondite, and those principles general which were at first peculiar, are the ungrateful heirs of all this knowledge to reproach the fathers of their literature with pedantry? Lord Bolingbroke has pointedly said of James I. that "his pedantry was too much even for the age in which he lived." His lordship knew little of that glorious age when the founders of our literature flourished. It had been overclouded by the French court of Charles II., a race of unprincipled wits, and the revolution-court of William, heated by a new faction, too impatient to discuss those principles of government which they had established. It was easy to ridicule what they did not always understand, and very rarely met with. But men of far higher genius than this monarch, Selden, Usher, and Milton, must first be condemned before this odium of pedantry can attach itself to the plain and unostentatious writings of James I., who, it is remarkable, has not scattered in them those oratorical periods, and elaborate fancies, which he indulged in his speeches and proclamations. These loud accusers of the pedantry of James were little aware that the king has expressed himself with energy and distinctness on this very topic. His majesty cautions Prince Henry against the use of any "corrupt leide, as *book-language*, and *pen-and-ink-horn termes*, and least of all, mignard and effeminate ones." One passage may be given entire as completely refuting a charge so general, yet so unfounded. "I would also advise you to write in *your own language*, for there is *nothing left to be said in Greek and Latine already*; and, ynewe (enough) of poore schollers would match you in these languages; and besides that it best becometh a *King*, to purifie and make famous *his owne tongue*; therein he may goe before all his subjects, as it setteth him well to doe in all honest and lawful things." No scholar of a pedantic taste could have dared so complete an emancipation from ancient, yet not obsolete prejudices, at a time when many of our own great authors yet imagined there was no fame for an Englishman unless he neglected his maternal language for the artificial labour of the idiom of ancient Rome. Bacon had even his own domestic Essays translated into Latin; and the king found a courtier-bishop to perform the same task for his majesty's writings. There was something prescient in this view of the national language, by the king, who contemplated in it those latent powers which had not yet burst into existence. It is evident that the line of Pope is false which describes the king as intending to rule "senates and courts" by "turning the council to a grammar-school."

HIS POLEMICAL STUDIES.

This censure of the pedantry of James is also connected with those studies of polemical divinity for which the king has incurred much ridicule from one party, who were not his contemporaries; and such vehement invective from another, who were; who, to their utter dismay, discovered their monarch descending into their theological gymnasium to encounter them with their own weapons.

The affairs of religion and politics in the reign of James I., as in the preceding one of Elizabeth *, were identified together; nor yet have the same causes in Europe ceased to act, however changed or modified. The government of James was imperfectly established while his subjects were wrestling with two great factions to obtain the predominance. The Catholics were disputing his title to the crown, which they aimed to carry into the family of Spain, and had even fixed on Arabella Stuart, to marry her to a Prince of Parma; and the Puritans would have abolished even sovereignty itself; these parties indeed were not able to take the field, but all felt equally powerful with the pen. Hence an age of doctrines. When a religious body has grown into power, it changes itself into a political one; the chiefs are flattered by their strength and stimulated by their ambition; but a powerful body in the state cannot remain stationary, and a divided empire it disdains. Religious controversies have therefore been usually coverings to mask the political designs of the heads of parties.

We smile at James the First, threatening the States-general by the English Ambassador about Vorstius, a Dutch professor, who had espoused the doctrines of Arminius, and had also vented some metaphysical notions of his own respecting

* I have more largely entered into the history of the party who attempted to subvert the government in the reign of Elizabeth, and who published their works under the assumed name of Martin Mar-prelate, than had hitherto been done. In our domestic annals that event and those personages are of some importance and curiosity, but were imperfectly known to the popular writers of our history.—See *Quarrels of Authors*, p. 296, *et seq.*

the occult nature of the Divinity. He was the head of the Remonstrants, who were at open war with the party called the Contra-Remonstrants. The ostensible subjects were religious doctrines, but the concealed one was a struggle between Pensionary Barnevelt, aided by the French interest, and the Prince of Orange, supported by the English; even to our own days the same opposite interests existed, and betrayed the Republic, although religious doctrines had ceased to be the pretext *.

What was passing between the Dutch Prince and the Dutch Pensionary was much like what was taking place between the King of England and his own subjects. James I. had to touch with a balancing hand the Catholics and the Non-conformists †—to play them one against another; but there was a distinct end in their views. "James I.," says Burnet, "continued always writing and talking against Popery, but acting for it." The King and the bishops were probably more tolerant to monarchists and prelatists, than to republicans and presbyters. When James got nothing but gunpowder and Jesuits from Rome, he was willing enough to banish, or suppress, but the Catholic families were ancient and numerous; and the most determined spirits which ever subverted a government were Catholic ‡. Yet what could the King expect from the party of the Puritans, and their "conceited parity," as he called it, should he once throw himself into their hands, but the fate his son received from them?

In the early stage of the Reformation, the Catholic still entered into the same church with the Reformed; this common union was broken by the impolitical impatience of the court of Rome, who, jealous of the tranquillity of Elizabeth, hoped to weaken her government by disunion §; but the Reformed were already separating among themselves by a new race who, fancying that their religion was still too Catholic, were for reforming the Reformation. These had most extravagant fancies, and were for modelling the government according to each particular man's notion. Were we to bend to the foreign despotism of the Roman Tiara, or that of the republican rabble of the Presbytery of Geneva?

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* Pensionary Barnevelt, in his seventy-second year, was at length brought to the block. Diodati, a divine of Geneva, made a miserable pun on the occasion; he said that "the *Canons* of the Synod of Dort had taken off the head of the advocate of Holland." This pun, says Brandt in his curious History of the Reformation, is very injurious to the Synod, since it intimates that the church loves blood. It never entered into the mind of these divines that Barnevelt fell, not by the Synod, but by the Orange and English party prevailing against the French. Lord Hardwicke, a statesman and a man of letters, deeply conversant with secret and public history, is a more able judge than the ecclesiastical historian or the Swiss divine, who could see nothing in the Synod of Dort, but what appeared in it. It is in Lord Hardwicke's preface to Sir Dudley Carleton's Letters that his Lordship has made this important discovery.

† James did all he could to weaken the Catholic party by dividing them in opinion. When Dr. Reynolds, the head of the Non-conformists, complained to the King of the printing and dispersing of Popish pamphlets, the King answered, that this was done by a warrant from the Court, to nourish the schism between the Seculars and Jesuits, which was of great service. "Doctor," added the King, "you are a better clergyman than statesman."—*Neale's History of the Puritans*, vol. i. p. 416, 4to.

‡ The character and demeanour of the celebrated Guy or Guido Fawkes, who appeared first before the council under the assumed name of Johnson, I find in a MS. letter of the times, which contains some characteristic touches not hitherto published. This letter is from Sir Edward Hoby to Sir Thomas Edmondes, our ambassador at the court of Brussels—dated 19th November, 1605. "One Johnson was found in the vault where the Gunpowder Plot was discovered. He was asked if he were sorry? He answered that he was only sorry it had not taken place. He was threatened that he should die a worse death than he that killed the Prince of Orange; he answered, that he could bear it as well. When Johnson was brought to the King's presence, the King asked him how he could conspire so hideous a treason against his children and so many innocent souls who had never offended him? He answered, that dangerous diseases required a desperate remedy; and he told some of the Scots that his intent was to have blown them back again into Scotland!"—Mordacious Guy Fawkes!

§ Sir Edward Coke, attorney-general, in the trial of Garnet the Jesuit, says, "There were no Recusants in England—all came to church howsoever Popishly inclined, till the Bull of Pius V. excommunicated and deposed Elizabeth. On this the Papists refused to join in the public service.—*State Trials*, vol. i. p. 242.

The Pope imagined, by false impressions he had received, that the Catholic party was strong enough to prevail against Elizabeth. Afterwards, when he found his error, a dispensation was granted by himself and his successor, that all Catholics might show outward obedience to Elizabeth till a happier opportunity. Such are Catholic politics and Catholic faith!

POLEMICAL STUDIES WERE POLITICAL.

It was in these times that James I., a learned prince, applied to polemical studies; properly understood, these were in fact political ones. Lord Bolingbroke says, "He affected more learning than became a king, which he broached on every occasion in such a manner as would have misbecome a schoolmaster." Would the politician then require a half-learned king, or a king without any learning at all? Our eloquent sophist appears not to have recollected that polemical studies had long with us been considered as royal ones; and that from a slender volume of the sort our sovereigns still derive the regal distinction of "Defenders of the Faith." The pacific government of James I. required that the King himself should be a master of these controversies to be enabled to balance the conflicting parties; and none but a learned king could have exerted the industry or attained to the skill.

THE HAMPTON-COURT CONFERENCE.

In the famous conference at Hampton Court which the King held with the heads of the Non-conformists, we see his Majesty conversing sometimes with great learning and sense, but oftener more with the earnestness of a man, than some have imagined comported with the dignity of a crowned head. The truth is, James, like a true student, indulged, even to his dress, an utter carelessness of parade, and there was in his character a constitutional warmth of heart and a jocundity of temper which did not always adapt it to state-occasions; he threw out his feelings, and sometimes his jests. James, who had passed his youth in a royal bondage, felt that these Non-conformists, while they were debating small points, were reserving for hereafter their great ones; were cloaking their republicanism by their theology, and, like all other politicians, that their ostensible were not their real motives*. Harris and Neale, the organs of the Non-conformists, inveigh against James; even Hume, with the philosophy of the eighteenth century, has pronounced that the king was censurable "for entering zealously into these frivolous disputes of theology." Lord Bolingbroke declares that the king held this conference "in haste to show his parts." Thus a man of genius substitutes suggestion and assertion for accuracy of knowledge. In the present instance, it was an attempt of the Puritans to try the king on his arrival in England; they presented a petition for a conference, called "The Millennary Petition†," from a thousand persons supposed to have signed it; the king would not refuse it; but so far from being "in haste to show his parts," that when he discovered their pretended grievances were so futile, "he complained that he had been troubled with such importunities, when some more private course might have been taken for their satisfaction."

The narrative of this once celebrated conference, notwithstanding the absurdity of the topics, becomes in the hands of the entertaining Fuller a picturesque and dramatic composition, where the dialogue and the manners of the speakers are after the life.

In the course of this conference we obtain a familiar intercourse with the king; we may admire the capacity of the monarch whose genius was versatile with the subjects; sliding from theme to theme with the ease which only mature studies could obtain; entering into the graver parts of these discussions; discovering a ready knowledge

* In political history we usually find that the heads of a party are much wiser than the party themselves, so that, whatever they intend to acquire, their first demands are small; but the honest souls who are only stirred by their own innocent zeal, are sure to complain that their business is done negligently. Should the party at first succeed, then the bolder spirit, which they have disguised or suppressed through policy, is left to itself; it starts unbridled and at full gallop. All this occurred in the case of the Puritans. We find that some of the rigid Non-conformists did confess in a pamphlet, "The Christian's modest offer of the Silenced Ministers, 1606," that those who were appointed to speak for them at Hampton Court were *not of their nomination or judgment*; they insisted that these delegates should declare at once against the whole church-establishment, &c., and model the government to each particular man's notions! But these delegates prudently refused to acquaint the king with the conflicting opinions of their constituents.—*Lansdowne MSS.* 1056, 51.

This confession of the Non-conformists is also acknowledged by their historian Neale, vol. ii. p. 419, 4to edit.

† The petition is given at length in Collier's Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 672. At this time also the Lay Catholics of England printed at Douay "A Petition Apologetical," to James I. Their language is remarkable: they complained they were excluded "that supreme court of parliament first founded by and for Catholike men, was furnished with Catholike prelates, peeres, and personages; and so continued till the times of *Edward VI.* a *childe*, and Queen Elizabeth a *woman*."—*Dodd's Church History.*

of biblical learning, which would sometimes throw itself out with his natural humour, in apt and familiar illustrations, throughout indulging his own personal feelings with an unparalleled *naïveté*.

The king opened the conference with dignity; "he said, he was happier than his predecessors, who had to alter what they found established, but he only to confirm what was well settled." One of the party made a notable discovery, that the surplice was a kind of garment used by the priests of Isis. The king observed that he had no notion of this antiquity, since he had always heard from them that it was "a rag of popery." "Dr. Reynolds," said the king with an air of pleasantry, "they used to wear hose and shoes in times of popery; have you therefore a mind to go barefoot?" Reynolds objected to the words used in matrimony, "with my body I thee worship." The king said the phrase was an usual English term, as a *gentleman of worship*, &c., and turning to the doctor, smiling, said, "Many a man speaks of Robin Hood, who never shot in his bow; if you had a good wife yourself, you would think all the honour and worship you could do to her were well bestowed." Reynolds was not satisfied on the 37th article, declaring that "The bishop of Rome hath no authority in this land," and desired it should be added, "nor ought to have any." In Barlow's narrative we find that on this his majesty heartily laughed—a laugh easily caught up by the lords; but the king nevertheless condescended to reply sensibly to the weak objection,

"What speak you of the pope's authority here? *Habemus jure quod habemus;* and therefore inasmuch as it is said he hath not, it is plain enough that he ought not to have." It was on this occasion that some "pleasant discourse passed," in which "a Puritan" was defined to be "a Protestant frightened out of his wits." The king is more particularly vivacious when he alludes to the occurrences of his own reign, or suspects the Puritans of republican notions. On one occasion, to cut the gordian-knot, the king royally decided—"I will not argue that point with you, but answer as kings in parliament, *Le Roy s'avisera.*"

When they hinted at a Scottish Presbytery, the king was somewhat stirred, yet what is admirable in him (says Barlow) without a show of passion. The king had lived among the republican saints, and had been, as he said, "A king without state, without honour, without order, where beardless boys would brave us to our face; and, like the Saviour of the world, though he lived among them, he was not of them." On this occasion, although the king may not have "shown his passion," he broke out, however, with a *naïve* effusion, remarkable for painting after the home-life a republican government. It must have struck Hume forcibly, for he has preserved part of it in the body of his history. Hume only consulted Fuller. I give the copious explosion from Barlow.

"If you aim at a Scottish Presbytery, it agreeth as well with monarchy as God and the devil. Then Jack, and Tom, and Will, and Dick, shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my council, and all our proceedings; then Will shall stand up and say, It must be thus; then Dick shall reply, Nay, marry, but we will have it thus. And therefore here I must once more reiterate my former speech, *Le Roy s'avisera.* Stay, I pray you, for one seven years before you demand that of me, and if then you find me pursy and fat, I may hearken to you; for let that government once be up, I am sure I shall be kept in breath; then shall we all of us have work enough: but, Dr. Reynolds, till you find that I grow lazy, let that alone."

The king added,

"I will tell you a tale:—Knox flattered the queen-regent of Scotland, that she was supreme head of all the church, if she suppressed the popish prelates. But how long, trow ye, did this continue? Even so long, till, by her authority, the popish bishops were repressed, and he himself, and his adherents, were brought in, and well settled. Then, lo! they began to make small account of her authority, and took the cause into their own hands."

This was a pointed political tale, appropriately told in the person of a monarch.

The king was never deficient in the force and quickness of his arguments. Even Neale, the great historian of the Puritans, complaining that Dean Barlow has cut off some of the king's speeches, is reluctantly compelled to tax himself with a high commendation of the monarch, who, he acknowledges, on one of the days of this conference, spoke against the corruptions of the church, and the practices of the prelates, in so much that Dr. Andrews, then dean of the chapel, said, that his Majesty did that day wonderfully play the Puritan*. The king, indeed, was

* The bishops of James I. were, as Fuller calls one of them, "potent courtiers," and too worldly-minded men. Bancroft was a man of vehement zeal, but of the most grasping avarice, as appears by an epigrammatic epitaph on his death in Arthur Wilson:—

"Here lies his grace, in cold earth clad,
Who died with want of what he had."

We find a characteristic trait of this bishop of London in this conference. When Ellesmere, Lord Chancellor, observed, that "livings rather

seriously inclined to an union of parties. More than once he silenced the angry tongue of Bancroft, and tempered the zeal of others; and even commended when he could Dr. Reynolds, the chief of the Puritans; the king consented to the only two important articles that side suggested; a new catechism adapted to the people—"Let the weak be informed and the wilful be punished," said the king; and that new translation of the Bible which forms our present version. "But," added the king, "it must be without marginal notes, for the Geneva Bible is the worst for them, full of seditious conceits; Asa is censured for *only deposing* his mother for idolatry, and not *killing* her." Thus early the dark spirit of Machiavel had lighted on that of the ruthless Calvin. The grievances of our first dissenters were futile—their innovations interminable; and we discover the king's notions, at the close of a proclamation issued after this conference. "Such is the desultory levity of some people, that they are always languishing after change and novelty, insomuch that were they humoured in their inconstancy, they would expose the public management, and make the administration ridiculous." Such is the vigorous style of James the First in his proclamations; and such is the political truth, which will not die away with the conference at Hampton Court.

These studies of polemical divinity, like those of the ancient scholastics, were not to be obtained without a robust intellectual exercise. James instructed his son Charles*, who excelled in them; and to those studies Whitelocke attributes that aptitude of Charles I. which made him so skilful a summer-up of arguments, and endowed him with so clear a perception in giving his decisions.

want learned men, than learned men livings, many in the Universities pining for want of places. I wish therefore some may have *single coats* (one living) before others have *doublets* (pluralities), and this method I have observed in bestowing the king's benefices." Bancroft replied, "I commend your memorable *care* that way; but a *doublet* is necessary in cold weather." Thus an avaricious bishop could turn off, with a miserable jest, the open avowal of his love of pluralities. Another, Neile, bishop of Lincoln, when any one preached who was remarkable for his piety, desirous of withdrawing the king's attention from truths he did not wish to have his Majesty reminded of, would in the sermon-time entertain the king with a merry tale, which the king would laugh at, and tell those near him, that he could not hear the preacher for the old — bishop; prefixing an epithet explicit of the character of these merry tales. Kennet has preserved for us this "rank relation," as he calls it; not, he adds, but, "we have had divers hammerings and conflicts within us to leave it out."

KENNET'S *History of England*, ii. 729.

* That the clergy were somewhat jealous of their sovereign's interference in these matters, may be traced. When James charged the chaplains, who were to wait on the prince in Spain, to decline, as far as possible, religious disputes, he added, that "should any happen, my son is able to moderate in them." The king, observing one of the divines smile, grew warm, vehemently affirming, "I tell ye, Charles shall manage a point in controversy with the best studied divine of ye all." What the king said, was afterwards confirmed on an extraordinary occasion, in the conference Charles I. held with Alexander Henderson, the old champion of the kirk. Deprived of books, which might furnish the sword and pistol of controversy, and without a chaplain to stand by him as a second, Charles I. fought the theological duel; and the old man, cast down, retired with such a sense of the learning and honour of the king, in maintaining the order of episcopacy in England, that his death, which soon followed, is attributed to the deep vexation of this discomfiture. The veteran, who had succeeded in subverting the hierarchy in Scotland, would not be apt to die of a fit of conversion; but vexation might be apoplectic in an old and sturdy disputant. The king's controversy was published; and nearly all the writers agree he carried the day. Yet some divines appear more jealous than grateful: Bishop Kennet, touched by the *esprit du corps*, honestly tells us, that "some thought the king had been better able to *protect* the church, if he had not *disputed* for it." This discovers all the ardour possible for the *establishment*, and we are to infer that an English sovereign is only to *fight* for his churchmen. But there is a nobler office for a sovereign to perform in ecclesiastical history—to promote the learned and the excellent, and repress the dissolute and the intolerant.

THE WORKS OF JAMES THE FIRST.

WE now turn to the writings of James the First. He composed a treatise on demoniacs and witches; those dramatic personages in courts of law. James and his council never suspected that those ancient foes to mankind could be dismissed by a simple *Nolle prosequi*. "A Commentary on the Revelations," which was a favourite speculation then, and on which greater geniuses have written since his day. "A Counterblast to Tobacco!" the title more ludicrous than the

design*. His Majesty terrified "the tobacconists," as the patriarchs of smoking-clubs were called, and who were selling their very lands and houses, in an epidemical madness, for "a stinking weed," by discovering that "they were making a sooty kitchen in their inward parts.†"

* Not long before James composed his treatise on "Dæmonologie," the learned Wierus had published an elaborate work on the subject. "*De præstigiis Dæmonum et incantationibus et Veneficiis*," &c. 1568. He advanced one step in philosophy by discovering that many of the supposed cases of incantation originated in the imagination of these sorcerers—but he advanced no farther, for he acknowledges the real diabolical presence. The physician, who pretended to cure the disease, was himself irrecoverably infected. Yet even this single step of Wierus was strenuously resisted by the learned Bodin, who, in his amusing volume of "Demonomanie des Sorciers," 1593, refutes Wierus. These are the leading authors of the times; who were followed by a crowd. Thus James I. neither wanted authorities to quote nor great minds to sanction his "Dæmonologie," first published in 1597. To the honour of England, a single individual, Reginald Scot, with a genius far advanced beyond his age, denied the very existence of those witches and demons in the curious volume of his "Discovery of Witchcraft," 1584. His books were burned! and the author was himself not quite out of danger; and Voetius, says Bayle, complains that when the work was translated into Dutch, it raised up a number of libertines who laughed at all the operations and the apparitions of devils. Casaubon and Glanvil, who wrote so much later, treat Scot with profound contempt, assuring us his reasonings are childish, and his philosophy absurd! Such was the reward of a man of genius combating with popular prejudices! Even so late as 1678, these popular superstitions were confirmed by the narrations and the philosophy of Glanvil, Dr. More, &c. The subject enters into the Commentaries on the Laws of England. An edict of Louis XIV. and a statute by George II. made an end of the whole *Diablerie*. Had James I. adopted the system of Reginald Scot, the king had probably been branded as an atheist king!

† Harris, with systematic ingenuity against James I. after abusing this tract, as a wretched performance, though himself probably had written a meaner one—quotes the curious information the king gives of the enormous abuse to which the practice of smoking was carried, expressing his astonishment at it. Yet, that James may not escape bitter censure, he abuses the king for levying a heavy tax on it to prevent this ruinous consumption, and his silly policy in discouraging such a branch of our revenues, and an article so valuable to our plantations, &c. As if James I. could possibly incur censure for the discoveries of two centuries after, of the nature of this plant! James saw great families ruined by the epidemic madness, and sacrificed the revenues which his crown might derive from it, to assist its suppression.* This was patriotism in the monarch.

And the king gained a point with the great majority of his subjects, when he demonstrated to their satisfaction that the pope was antichrist. Ridiculous as these topics are to us, the works themselves were formed on what modern philosophers affect to term, the principle of utility; a principle which, with them indeed, includes everything they approve of, and nothing they dislike.

It was a prompt honesty of intention to benefit his people, which seems to have been the urgent motive that induced this monarch to become an author, more than any literary ambition; for he writes on no prepared or permanent topic, and even published anonymously, and as he once wrote "post-haste," what he composed or designed for practical and immediate use; and even in that admirable treatise on the duties of a sovereign, which he addressed to prince Henry, a great portion is directed to the exigencies of the times, the parties, and the circumstances of his own court. Of the works now more particularly noticed, their interest has ceased with the melancholy follies which at length have passed away; although the philosophical inquirer will not choose to drop this chapter in the history of mankind. But one fact in favour of our royal author is testified by the honest Fuller and the cynical Osborne. On the king's arrival in England, having discovered the numerous impostures and illusions which he had often referred to as authorities, he grew suspicious of the whole system of "Dæmonologie," and at length recanted it entirely. With the same conscientious zeal James had written the book, the king condemned it; and the sovereign separated himself from the author, in the cause of truth; but the clergy and the parliament persisted in making the imaginary crime felony by the statute, and it is only a recent act of parliament which has forbidden the appearance of the possessed and the spae-wife.

But this apology for having written these treatises need not rest on this fact, however honourably it appeals to our candour. Let us place it on higher ground, and tell those who asperse this monarch for his credulity and intellectual weakness, that they themselves, had they lived in the reign of James I., had probably written on the same topics, and felt as uneasy at the rumour of a witch being a resident in their neighbourhood!

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE AGE.

This and the succeeding age were the times of omens and meteors, prognostics and providences —of "day-fatality," or, the superstition of fortunate and unfortunate days, and the combined powers of astrology and magic. It was only at the close of the century of James I. that Bayle wrote a treatise on comets, to prove that they had no influence in the cabinets of princes: this was, however, done with all the precaution imaginable. The greatest minds were then sinking under such popular superstitions; and whoever has read much of the private history of this age will have smiled at their ludicrous terrors and bewildered reasonings. The most ordinary events were attributed to an interposition of Providence. In the unpublished memoirs of that learned antiquary, Sir Symond D'Ewes, such frequently occur. When a comet appeared, and D'Ewes, for exercise at college, had been ringing the great bell, and entangled himself in the rope, which had nearly strangled him, he resolves not to ring while the comet is in the heavens. When a fire happened at the Six Clerks' Office, of whom his father was one, he inquires into the most prominent sins of the six clerks: these were the love of the world, and doing business on Sundays; and it seems they thought so themselves; for after the fire, the office-door was fast closed on the Sabbath. When the Thames had an unusual ebb and flow, it was observed, that it had never happened in their recollection, but just before the rising of the Earl of Essex in Elizabeth's reign,—and Sir Symond became uneasy at the political aspect of affairs.

All the historians of these times are very particular in marking the bearded beams of blazing stars; and the first public event that occurs is always connected with the radiant course. Arthur Wilson describes one which preceded the death of the simple queen of James I. It was generally imagined, that "this great light in the heaven was sent as a flambeaux to her funeral;" but the historian discovers, while "this blaze was burning, the fire of war broke out in Bohemia." It was found difficult to decide between the two opinions; and Rushworth, who wrote long afterwards, carefully chronicles both.

The truth is, the greatest geniuses of the age of James I. were as deeply concerned in these investigations as his Majesty. Had the great Verulam emancipated himself from all the dreams of his age? He speaks indeed cautiously of witchcraft, but does not deny its occult agency; and of astrology he is rather for the improvement than the rejection. The bold spirit of Rawleigh contended with the superstitions of the times; but how feeble is the contest where we fear to strike! Even Rawleigh is prodigal of his praise to James for the king's chapter on magic. The great mind of Rawleigh perceived how much men are formed and changed by *education*; but, were this principle admitted to its extent, the *stars* would lose their influence! In pleading for the free agency of man, he would escape from the pernicious tendency of predestination, or the astral influence, which yet he allows. To extricate himself from the dilemma, he invents an analogical reasoning of a royal power of dispensing with the laws in extreme cases: so that, though he does not deny "the binding of the stars," he declares they are controllable by the will of the Creator. In this manner, fettered by prevalent opinions, he satisfies the superstitions of an astrological age, and the penetration of his own genius. At a much later period Dr. Henry More, a writer of genius, confirmed the ghost and demon creed, by a number of facts, as marvellously pleasant as any his own poetical fancy could have invented. Other great authors have not less distinguished themselves. When has there appeared a single genius, who at once could free himself of the traditional prejudices of his contemporaries—nay, of his own party? Genius, in its advancement beyond the intelligence of its own age, is but progressive; it is fancifully said to soar, but it only climbs. Yet the minds of some authors of this age are often discovered to be superior to their work; because the mind is impelled by its own inherent powers, but the work usually originates in the age. James I. once acutely observed, how "the author may be wise, but the work foolish."

Thus minds of a higher rank than our royal author, had not yet cleared themselves out of these clouds of popular prejudices. We now proceed to more decisive results of the superior capacity of this much ill-used monarch.

THE HABITS OF JAMES THE FIRST THOSE OF A MAN OF LETTERS.

The habits of life of this monarch were those of a man of letters. His first studies were soothed by none of their enticements. If James loved literature, it was for itself; for Buchanan did not tinge the rim of the vase with honey; and the bitterness was tasted not only in the draught, but also in the rod. In some princes, the harsh discipline James passed through has raised a strong aversion against literature. The Dauphin, for whose use was formed the well-known edition of the classics, looked on the volumes with no eye of love. To free himself of his tutor, Huet, he eagerly consented to an early marriage. "Now we shall see if Mr. Huet shall any more keep me to ancient

geography!" exclaimed the dauphin, rejoicing in the first act of despotism. This ingenuous sally, it is said, too deeply affected that learned man for many years afterwards. Huet's zealous gentleness (for how could Huet be too rigid?) wanted the art which Buchanan disdained to practise. But, in the case of the prince of Scotland, a constitutional timidity combining with an ardour for study, and therefore a veneration for his tutor, produced a more remarkable effect. Such was the terror which the remembrance of this illustrious but inexorable republican left on the imagination of his royal pupil, that even so late as when James was seated on the English throne, once the appearance of his frowning tutor in a dream greatly agitated the king, who in vain attempted to pacify him in this portentous vision. This extraordinary fact may be found in a manuscript letter of that day*.

James, even by the confession of his bitter satirist, Francis Osborne, "dedicated rainy weather to his standish, and fair to his hounds." His life had the uniformity of a student's; but the regulated life of a learned monarch must have weighed down the gay and dissipated with the deadliest monotony. Hence one of these courtiers declared that, if he were to awake after a sleep of seven years' continuance, he would undertake to enumerate the whole of his Majesty's occupations, and every dish that had been placed on the table during the interval. But this courtier was not aware that the monotony which the king occasioned him was not so much in the king himself as in his own volatile spirit.

The table of James I. was a trial of wits, says a more learned courtier, who often partook of these prolonged conversations: those genial and convivial conferences were the recreations of the king, and the means often of advancing those whose talents had then an opportunity of discovering themselves. A life so constant in its pursuits was to have been expected from the temper of him who, at the view of the Bodleian library, exclaimed, "Were I not a king, I would be an university man; and if it were so that I must be a prisoner, I would have no other prison than this library, and be *chained together* with all these goodly authors†."

Study, indeed, became one of the businesses of life with our contemplative monarch; and so zealous was James to form his future successor, that he even seriously engaged in the education of both his sons. James I. offers the singular spectacle of a father who was at once a preceptor and a monarch: it was in this spirit the king composed his "Basilicon Doron, or his Majesty's Instructions to his dearest Son Henry the Prince," a work of which something more than the intention is great; and he directed the studies of the unfortunate Charles. That both these princes were no common pupils, may be fairly attributed to the king himself. Never did the character of a young prince shoot out with nobler promises than Henry: an enthusiast for literature and arms, that prince early showed a great and commanding spirit. Charles was a man of fine taste: he had talents and virtues, errors and misfortunes; but he was not without a spirit equal to the days of his trial.

FACILITY AND COPIOUSNESS OF HIS COMPOSITION.

THE mind of James I. had at all times the fulness of a student's, delighting in the facility and

* The learned Mede wrote the present letter soon after another, which had not been acknowledged, to his friend Sir M. Stuteville; and the writer is uneasy lest the political secrets of the day might bring the parties into trouble. It seems he was desirous that letter should be read, and then burnt.

"*March* 31, 1622.

"I hope my letter miscarried not; if it did, I am in a sweet pickle. I desired to hear from you of the receipt and extinction of it. Though there is no danger in my letters whilst report is so rife, yet when it is forgotten they will not be so safe; but your danger is as great as mine——

"Mr. Downham was with me, now come from London. He told me that it was three years ago since those verses were delivered to the king in a dream, by his Master Buchanan, who seemed to *check him severely, as he used to do;* and his Majesty, in his dream, seemed desirous to pacify him, but he, *turning away with a frowning countenance*, would utter those verses, which his Majesty, perfectly remembering, repeated the next day, and many took notice of them. Now, by occasion of the late soreness in his arm, and the doubtfulness what it would prove; especially having, by mischance, fallen into the fire with that arm, the remembrance of the verses began to trouble him."

It appears that these verses were of a threatening nature, since, in a melancholy fit, they were recalled to recollection after an interval of three years; the verses are lost to us, with the letter which contained them.

† In this well-known exclamation of James I., a witty allusion has been probably overlooked. The king had in his mind the then prevalent custom of securing books by fastening them to the shelves by *chains*, long enough to reach to the reading-desks under them.

copiousness of composition. The king wrote in one week one hundred folio pages of a monitory address to the European sovereigns; and, in as short a time, his apology, sent to the pope and cardinals. These he delivered to the bishops merely as notes for their use; but they were declared to form of themselves a complete answer. "*Qua felicitate* they were done, let others judge; but, *Qua celeritate*, I can tell," says the courtly bishop who collected the king's works, and who is here quoted, not for the compliment he would infer, but for the fact he states. The week's labour of his majesty provoked from Cardinal Perron about one thousand pages in folio, and replies and rejoinders from the learned in Europe*.

HIS ELOQUENCE.

THE eloquence of James is another feature in the literary character of this monarch. Amid the sycophancy of the court of a learned sovereign, some truths will manifest themselves. Bishop Williams, in his funeral eulogy of James I., has praised with warmth the eloquence of the departed monarch, whom he intimately knew; and this was an acquisition of James's, so manifest to all, that the bishop made eloquence essential to the dignity of a monarch; observing, that "it was the want of it that made Moses, in a manner, refuse all government, though offered by God†." He would not have hazarded so peculiar an eulogium, had not the monarch been distinguished by that talent.

Hume first observed of James I., that "the speaker of the House of Commons is usually an eminent man; yet the harangue of his Majesty will always be found much superior to that of the speaker in every parliament during this reign." His numerous proclamations are evidently wrought by his own hand, and display the pristine vigour of the state of our age of genius. That the state-papers were usually composed by himself, a passage in the Life of the Lord-keeper Williams testifies; and when Sir Edward Conway, who had been bred a soldier, and was even illiterate, became a viscount, and a royal secretary by the appointment of Buckingham, the king, who in fact wanted no secretary, would often be merry over his imperfect scrawls in writing, and his hacking of sentences in reading, often breaking out in laughter, exclaiming, "Stenny has provided me with a secretary who can neither write nor read, and a groom of my bed-chamber who cannot truss my points,"—this latter person having but one hand! It is evident, since Lord Conway, the most inefficient secretary ever king had, and I have myself seen his scrawls, remained many years in office, that James I. required no secretary, and transacted his affairs with his own mind and hand. These habits of business and of study prove that James indulged much less those of indolence, for which he is so gratuitously accused.

HIS WIT.

AMID all the ridicule and contempt in which the intellectual capacity of James I. is involved, this college-pedant, who is imagined to have given into every species of false wit, and never to have reached beyond quibbles, puns, conceits, and

* Mr. Lodge, in his "Illustrations of British History," praises and abuses James I. for the very same treatises. Mr. Lodge, dropping the sober character of the antiquary for the smarter one of the critic, tells us, "James had the good fortune to gain the two points he principally aimed at in the publication of these *dull treatises*—the reputation of an acute disputant, and the honour of having Cardinal Bellarmin for an antagonist." Did Mr. Lodge ever read these "dull treatises?" I declare I never have; but I believe these treatises are not dull, from the inference he draws from them: for how any writer can gain the reputation of "an acute disputant" by writing "dull treatises," Mr. Lodge only can explain. It is in this manner, and by unphilosophical critics, that the literary reputation of James has been flourished down by modern pens. It was sure game to attack James I.!

† This funeral sermon, by laying such a stress on the *eloquence* of James I., it is said, occasioned the disgrace of the zealous bishop; perhaps, also, by the arts of the new courtiers practising on the feelings of the young monarch. It appears that Charles betrayed frequent symptoms of impatience. This allusion to the *stammering* of Moses was most unlucky; for Charles had this defect in his delivery, which he laboured all his life to correct. In the first speech from the throne, he alludes to it: "Now, because *I am unfit for much speaking*, I mean to bring up the fashion of my predecessors, to have my lord-keeper speak for me in most things." And he closed a speech to the Scottish parliament by saying, that "he does not offer to endear himself by words, *which indeed is not my way.*" This, however, proved to be one of those little circumstances which produce a more important result than is suspected. By this substitution of a lord-keeper instead of the sovereign, he failed in exciting the personal affections of his parliament. Even the most gracious speech from the lips of a lord-keeper is but formally delivered, and coldly received; and Charles had not yet learned that there are no deputies for our feelings.

quolibets,—was in truth a great wit; quick in retort, and happy in illustration; and often delivering opinions with a sententious force. More wit and wisdom from his lips have descended to us than from any other of our sovereigns. One of the malicious writers of his secret history, Sir Anthony Weldon, not only informs us that he was witty, but describes the manner. "He was very witty, and had as many witty jests as any man living; at which he would not smile himself, but deliver them in a grave and serious manner." Thus the king was not only witty, but a dextrous wit: nor is he one of those who are recorded as having only said one good thing in their lives; for his vein was not apt to dry.

His conversations, like those of most literary men, he loved to prolong at table. We find them described by one who had partaken of them:—

"The reading of some books before him was very frequent, while he was at his repast; and otherwise he collected knowledge by variety of questions, which he carved out to the capacity of different persons. Methought his hunting humour was not off, while the learned stood about him at his board; he was ever in chace after some disputable doubts, which he would wind and turn about with the most stabbing objections that ever I heard; and was as pleasant and fellow-like, in all these discourses, as with his huntsman in the field. Those who were ripe and weighty in their answers, were ever designed for some place of credit or profit *."

SPECIMENS OF HIS HUMOUR, AND OBSERVATIONS ON HUMAN LIFE.

The relics of his witticisms and observations on human life, on state affairs, in literature and history, are scattered among contemporary writers, and some are even traditional; I regret that I have not preserved many which occurred in the course of reading. It has happened, however, that a man of genius has preserved for posterity some memorials of the wit, the learning, and the sense of the monarch †.

In giving some loose specimens of the wit and capacity of a man, if they are too few, it may be imagined that they are so from their rarity; and if too many, the page swells into a mere collection. But truth is not over nice to obtain her purpose, and even the common labours she inspires are associated with her pleasures.

Early in life James I. had displayed the talent of apt allusion, and his classical wit on the Spaniards, that "He expected no other favour from them than the courtesy of Polyphemus to Ulysses—to be the last devoured," delighted Elizabeth, and has even entered into our history. Arthur Wilson, at the close of his Life of James I., has preserved one of his apothegms, while he censures him for not making timely use of it. "Let that prince, who would beware of conspiracies, be rather jealous of such whom his extraordinary favours have advanced, than of those whom his displeasure hath discontented. *These* want means to execute their pleasures, but *those* have means at pleasure to execute their desires."—Wilson himself ably developes this important state-observation, by adding, that "Ambition to rule is more vehement than malice to revenge." A pointed reflection, which rivals a maxim of Rochefoucault.

The king observed, that "Very wise men and very fools do little harm; it is the mediocrity of wisdom that troubleth all the world."—He described, by a lively image, the differences which rise in argument: "Men, in arguing, are often carried by the force of words farther asunder than their question was at first; like two ships going out of the same haven, their landing is many times whole countries distant."

One of the great national grievances, as it appeared both to the government and the people, in James's reign, was the perpetual growth of the metropolis; and the nation, like an hypochondriac,

* Hacket's curious Life of the Lord-keeper, Williams, p. 38, Part 11.

† In the Harl. MSS. 7582, Art. 3, one entitled "Crumms fallen from King James's Table; or his Table-Talk, taken by Sir Thomas Overbury. The original being in his own handwriting." This MS. has been, perhaps, imperfectly printed in "The Prince's Cabala, or Mysteries of State," 1715. This Collection of Sir Thomas Overbury was shortened by his unhappy fate, since he perished early in the reign.—Another Harl. MS. contains things "as they were at sundrie times spoken by James I." I have drawn others from the Harl. MSS. 6395. We have also printed, "Wittie Observations, gathered in King James's ordinary Discourse," 1643; "King James his Apothegmes or Table Talk as they were by him delivered occasionally, and by the publisher his quondam servant carefully received, by B. A. gent. 4°. in eight leaves, 1643." The collector was Ben^n. Agar, who had gathered them in his youth; "Witty Apothegmes, delivered at several times by King James, King Charles, the Marquis of Worcester," &c. 1658.

The collection of Apothegms formed by Lord Bacon offers many instances of the king's wit and sense. See Lord Bacon's Apothegms new and old; they are numbered to 275 in the edition 1819. Basil Montague in his edition has separated what he distinguishes as the spurious ones.

was ludicrously terrified that their head was too monstrous for their body, and drew all the moisture of life from the remoter parts. It is amusing to observe the endless and vain precautions employed to stop all new buildings, and to force persons out of town to reside at their country mansions. Proclamations warned and exhorted, but the very interference of prohibition rendered the crowded town more delightful. One of its attendant calamities was the prevalent one of that day, the plague; and one of those state libels, which were early suppressed, or never printed, entitled, "Balaam's Ass," has this passage: "In this deluge of new buildings, we shall be all poisoned with breathing in one another's faces; and your Majesty hath most truly said, England will shortly be London, and London, England." It was the popular wish, that country gentlemen should reside more on their estates, and it was on this occasion the king made that admirable allusion, which has been in our days repeated in the House of Commons: "Gentlemen resident on their estates were like ships in port—their value and magnitude were felt and acknowledged; but, when at a distance, as their size seemed insignificant, so their worth and importance were not duly estimated." The king abounded with similar observations; for he drew from life more than even from books.

James is reproached for being deficient in political sagacity; notwithstanding that he somewhat prided himself on what he denominated "king's-craft." This is the fate of a pacific and domestic prince!

"A king," said James, "ought to be a preserver of his people, as well of their fortunes as lives, and not a destroyer of his subjects. Were I to make such a war as the King of France doth, with such tyranny on his own subjects—with Protestants on one side, and his soldiers drawn to slaughter on the other,—I would put myself in a monastery all my days after, and repent me that I had brought my subjects to such misery."

That James was an adept in his "king's-craft," by which term he meant the science of politics, but which has been so often misinterpreted in an ill sense, even the confession of such a writer as Sir Anthony Weldon testifies; who acknowledges, that "no prince living knew how to make use of men better than King James." He certainly foresaw the spirit of the Commons, and predicted to the prince and Buckingham, events which occurred after his death. When Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, whom James considered a useful servant, Buckingham sacrificed, as it would appear, to the clamours of a party, James said, "You are making a rod for your own back;" and when Prince Charles was encouraging the frequent petitions of the Commons, James told him, "You will live to have your bellyful of petitions." The following anecdote may serve to prove his political sagacity.—When the Emperor of Germany, instigated by the pope and his own state-interests, projected a crusade against the Turks, he solicited from James the aid of three thousand Englishmen; the wise and pacific monarch, in return, advised the emperor's ambassador to apply to France and Spain, as being more nearly concerned in this project: but the ambassador very ingeniously argued, that James being a more remote prince, would more effectually alarm the Turks, from a notion of a general armament of the Christian princes against them. James got rid of the importunate ambassador by observing, that "three thousand Englishmen would do no more hurt to the Turks, than fleas to their skins: great attempts may do good by a destruction, but little ones only stir up anger to hurt themselves."

His vein of familiar humour flowed at all times, and his facetiousness was sometimes indulged at the cost of his royalty. In those unhappy differences between him and his parliament, one day mounting his horse, which, though usually sober and quiet, began to bound and prance,—"Sirrah!" exclaimed the king, who seemed to fancy that his favourite prerogative was somewhat resisted on this occasion, "if you be not quiet, I'll send you to the five hundred kings in the lower house: they'll quickly tame you."—When one of the Lumleys was pushing on his lineal ascent beyond the patience of the hearers, the king, to cut short the tedious descendant of the Lumleys, cried out, "Stop mon! thou needst no more: now I learn that Adam's surname was Lumley!" When Colonel Gray, a military adventurer of that day, just returned from Germany, seemed vain of his accoutrements, on which he had spent his all,—the king, staring at this buckled, belted, sworded, and pistolled, but ruined, Martinet, observed, that "this town was so well fortified, that, were it victualled, it might be impregnable."

EVIDENCES OF HIS SAGACITY IN THE DISCOVERY OF TRUTH.

Possessing the talent of eloquence, the quickness of wit, and the diversified knowledge which produced his "Table-Talk," we find also many evidences of his sagacity in the discovery of truth, with that patient zeal so honourable to a monarch. When the ship-wrights, jealous of Pett our great naval architect, formed a party against him, the king would judge with his own eyes. Having examined the materials depreciated by Pett's accusers, he declared that "the cross-grain was

in the men, not in the timber." The king, on historical evidence, and by what he said in his own works, claims the honour of discovering the gunpowder-plot, by the sagacity and reflection with which he solved the enigmatical and ungrammatical letter sent on that occasion. The train of his thoughts has even been preserved to us; and, although a loose passage, in a private letter of the Earl of Salisbury, contradicted by another passage in the same letter, would indicate that the earl was the man; yet even Mrs. Macaulay acknowledges the propriety of attributing the discovery to the king's sagacity. Several proofs of his zeal and reflection in the detection of imposture might be adduced; and the reader may, perhaps, be amused by these.

There existed a conspiracy against the Countess of Exeter by Lady Lake, and her daughter, Lady Ross. They had contrived to forge a letter in the countess's name, in which she confessed all the heavy crimes they accused her of, which were incest, witchcraft, &c.*; and, to confirm its authenticity, as the king was curious respecting the place, the time, and the occasion, when the letter was written, their maid swore it was at the countess's house at Wimbledon, and that she had written it at the window, near the upper end of the great chamber; and that she (the maid) was hid beneath the tapestry, where she heard the countess read over the letter after writing. The king appeared satisfied with this new testimony; but, unexpectedly, he visited the great chamber at Wimbledon, observed the distance of the window, placed himself behind the hangings, and made the lords in their turn: not one could distinctly hear the voice of a person placed at the window. The king further observed, that the tapestry was two feet short of the ground, and that any one standing behind it must inevitably be discovered. "Oaths cannot confound my sight," exclaimed the king. Having also effectuated other discoveries with a confession of one of the parties, and Sir Thomas Lake being a faithful servant of James, as he had been of Elizabeth, the king, who valued him, desired he would not stand the trial with his wife and daughter: but the old man pleaded that he was a husband, and a father, and must fall with them. "It is a fall!" said the king: "your wife is the serpent; your daughter is Eve; and you, poor man, are Adam †!"

* Camden's Annals of James I. Kennet II. 652.

† The suit cost Sir Thomas Lake £30,000; the fines in the star-chamber were always heavy in all reigns. Harris refers to this cause as an evidence of the tyrannic conduct of James I. as if the king was always influenced by personal dislike; but he does not give the story.

The sullen Osborne reluctantly says, "I must confess he was the promptest man living in detecting an imposture." There was a singular impostor in his reign, of whom no one denies the king the merit of detecting the deception—so far was James I. from being credulous, as he is generally supposed to have been. Ridiculous as the affair may appear to us, it had perfectly succeeded with the learned fellows of New College, Oxford, and afterwards with heads as deep; and it required some exertion of the king's philosophical reasoning to pronounce on the deception.

One Haddock, who was desirous of becoming a preacher, but had a stuttering and slowness of utterance, which he could not get rid of, took to the study of physic; but recollecting, that, when at Winchester, his schoolfellows had told him that he spoke fluently in his sleep, he tried, affecting to be asleep, to form a discourse on physic. Finding that he succeeded, he continued the practice: he then tried divinity, and spoke a good sermon. Having prepared one for the purpose, he sat up in his bed, and delivered it so loudly, that it attracted attention in the next chamber. It was soon reported that Haddock preached in his sleep; and nothing was heard but inquiries after the *sleeping preacher*, who soon found it his interest to keep up the delusion. He was now considered as a man truly inspired; and he did not in his own mind rate his talent at less worth than the first vacant bishopric. He was brought to court, where the greatest personages anxiously sat up through the night by his bedside. They tried all the maliciousness of Puck, to pinch and to stir him: he was without hearing or feeling; but they never departed without an orderly text and sermon; at the close of which, groaning and stretching himself, he pretended to awake, declaring he was unconscious of what had passed. "The king," says Wilson, no flatterer of James, "privately handled him so like a chirurgeon, that he found out the sore." The king was present at one of these sermons, and forbid them; and his reasonings, on this occasion, brought the sleeping preacher on his knees. The king observed, that things studied in the day-time may be dreamed of in the night, but always irregularly, without order; not, as these sermons were, good and learned: as particularly the one preached before his Majesty in his sleep—which he first treated physically, then theologically; "and I observed," said the king, "that he always preaches best when he has the most crowded audience." "Were he allowed to proceed, all slander and treason might pass under colour of being asleep," added the king, who, notwithstanding his pretended inspiration, awoke the sleeping preacher for ever afterwards.

BASILICON DORON.

THAT treatise of James I., entitled "Basilicon Doron, or, His Majesty's Instruction to his dearest son, Henry, the Prince," was composed by the king in Scotland, in the freshness of his studious days; a work, addressed to a prince by a monarch, which, in some respects, could only have come from the hand of such a workman. The morality and the politics often retain their curiosity and their value. Our royal author has drawn his principles of government from the classical volumes of antiquity; for then politicians quoted Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero. His waters had, indeed, flowed over those beds of ore*; but the growth and vigour of the work comes from the mind of the king himself: he writes for the Prince of Scotland, and about the Scottish people. On its first appearance, Camden has recorded the strong sensation it excited: it was not only admired, but it entered into and won the hearts of men. Harris, forced to acknowledge, in his mean style and with his frigid temper, that "this book contains some tolerable things," omits not to hint, that "it might not be his own:" but the claims of James I. are evident from the peculiarity of the style; the period at which it was composed; and by those particular passages stamped with all the individuality of the king himself. The style is remarkable for its profuse sprinkling of Scottish and French words, where the Doric plainness of the one, and the intelligent expression of the other, offer curious instances of the influence of manners over language; the diction of the royal author is a striking evidence of the intermixture of the two nations, and of a court which had marked its divided interests by its own chequered language.

This royal manual still interests a philosophical mind; like one of those antique and curious pictures we sometimes discover in a cabinet,—studied for the costume: yet where the touches of nature are true, although the colouring is brown and faded; but there is a force, and sometimes even a charm, in the ancient simplicity, to which even the delicacy of taste may return, not without pleasure. The king tells his son:—

"Sith all people are naturally inclined to follow their prince's example, in your own person make your wordes and deedes to fight together; and let your own life be a law-book, and a mirror to your people, that therein they may read the practice of their own lawes, and see by your image what life they should lead."

"But vnto one faulte is all the common people of this kingdome subject, as well burgh as land; which is, to judge and speak rashly of their prince, setting the commonweale vpon foure props, as wee call it; euer wearying of the present estate, and desirous of nouelties." The remedy the king suggests, "besides the execution of laws that are to be vsed against vnreuerent speakers," is so to rule, as that "the subjects may not only live in suretie and wealth, but be stirred vp to open their mouthes in your iust praise."

JAMES THE FIRST'S IDEA OF A TYRANT AND A KING.

THE royal author distinguishes a king from a tyrant, on their first entrance into the government.

"A tyrant will enter like a saint, till he find himself fast under foot, and then will suffer his unruly affections to burst forth." He advises the prince to act contrary to Nero, who, at first, 'with his tender-hearted wish, *vellem nescire literas*,' appeared to lament that he was to execute the laws. He, on the contrary, would have the prince early shew "the severitie of justice, which will settle the country, and make them know that ye can strike: this would be but for a time. If otherwise ye kyth (shew) your clemencie at the first the offences would soon come to such heapes, and the contempt of you grow so great, that when ye would fall to punish, the number to be punished would exceed the innocent; and ye would, against your nature, be compelled then to wracke manie, whom the chastisement of few in the beginning might have preserved. In this my own dear-bought experience may serve you for a different lesson. For I confess, where I thought (by being gracious at the beginning) to gain all men's heart to a loving and willing obedience, I by the contrarie found the disorder of the countrie, and the loss of my thanks, to be all my reward."

James, in the course of the work, often instructs the prince by his own errors and misfortunes; and certainly one of these was an excess of the kinder impulses in granting favours; there was nothing selfish in his happiness; James seemed to wish that every one around him should participate in the fulness of his own enjoyment. His hand was always open to scatter about him honours and wealth, and not always on unworthy favourites, but often on learned men whose talents he knew well to appreciate. There was a warmth in the king's temper which once he himself well described; he did not like those who pride themselves on their tepid dispositions. "I love not one that will never be angry, for as he that is without sorrow is without gladness, so he that is without anger is without love. Give me the heart of a man, and

* James, early in life, was a fine scholar, and a lover of the ancient historians, as appears from an accidental expression of Buchanan's, in his dedication to James of his "Baptistes;" referring to Sallust, he adds, *apud* TUUM *Salustium*.

out of that all his actions shall be acceptable." The king thus addresses the prince:—

ON THE CHOICE OF SERVANTS AND ASSOCIATES.

"Be not moved with importunities; for the which cause, as also for augmenting your Maiestie, be not so facile of access-giving at all times, as I have been."—In his minority, the choice of his servants had been made by others, "recommending servants unto me, more for serving, in effect, their friends that put them in, than their maister that admitted them, and used them well, at the first rebellion raised against me. Chuse you your own servantes for your own vse, and not for the vse of others; and, since ye must be *communis parens* to all your people, chuse indifferentlie out of all quarters; not respecting other men's appetites, but their own qualities. For as you must command all, so reason would ye should be served of all.—Be a daily watchman over your own servants, that they obey your laws precisely: for how can your laws be kept in the country, if they be broken at your eare!—Bee homelie or strange with them, as ye think their behaviour deserveth and their nature may bear ill.—Employ every man as ye think him qualified, but use not one in all things, lest he wax proud, and be envied by his fellows.—As for the other sort of your companie and servants, they ought to be of perfect age, see they be of a good fame; otherwise what can the people think but that ye have chosen a companion unto you according to your own humour, and so have preferred those men for the love of their vices and crimes, that ye knew them to be guiltie of. For the people, that see you not within, cannot judge of you but according to the outward appearance of your actions and company, which only is subject to their sight."

THE REVOLUTIONISTS OF THAT AGE.

James I. has painted, with vivid touches, the Anti-Monarchists, or Revolutionists, of his time. He describes "their imagined democracie, where they fed themselves with the hope to become *tribuni plebi*; and so, in a popular government, by leading the people by the nose, to bear the sway of all the rule.—Every faction," he adds, "always joined them. I was oft-times calumniated in their popular sermons, not for any evill or vice in me*, but because I was a king, which they thought the highest evill; and, because they were ashamed to professe this quarrel, they were busie to look narrowly in all my actions, pretending to distinguish the lawfulness of the office from the vice of the person: yet some of them would snapper out well grossly with the trewth of their intentions, informing the people that all kings and princes were naturally enemies to the liberties of the church; whereby the ignorant were emboldened (as bayards)†, to cry the learned and modest out of it: but their parity is the mother of confusion, and enemie to vnitie, which is the mother of order.' And it is not without eloquence his Majesty describes these factious Anti-Monarchists, as "Men, whom no deserts can oblige, neither oaths nor promises bind; breathing nothing but sedition and calumnies, aspiring without measure, railing without reason, and making their own imaginations the square of their conscience. I protest, before the great God, and, since I am here as vpon my testament, it is no place for me to lie in, that ye shall never find with any Hie-land, or Border theeves, greater ingratitude, and more lies and vile perjuries: ye may keep them for trying your patience, as Socrates did an evill wife."

OF THE NOBILITY OF SCOTLAND.

The king makes three great divisions of the Scottish people: the church, the nobility, and the burghers.

Of the nobility, the king counsels the prince to check

"A fectless arrogant conceit of their greatness and power, drinking in with their very nourish-milk. Teach your nobilitie to keep your lawes, as precisely as the meanest; fear not their orping, or being discontented, as long as ye rule well: for their pretended reformation of princes taketh never effect, but where evil government proceedeth. Acquaint yourself so with all the honest men of your barone and gentlemen, giving access so open and affable, to make their own suites to you themselves, and not to employ the great lordes, their intercessours; so shall ye bring to a measure their monstrous backes. And for their barbarous feides (feuds), put the laws to due execution made by mee there-anent; beginning ever rathest at him that yee love best, and is oblished vnto you, to make him an example to the rest. Make all your reformations to begin at your elbow, and so by degrees to the extremities of the land."

* The conduct of James I. in Scotland has even extorted praise from one of his bitterest calumniators; for Mrs. Macaulay has said, "His conduct, when King of Scotland, was in many points unexceptionable."

† An old French word, expressing, "a man that gapes or gazes earnestly at a thing; a fly-catcher; a greedy and unmannerly beholder."—*Cotgrave.*

He would not, however, that the prince should highly contemn the nobility; "Remember, howe that error brake the king, my grandfather's heart. Consider that vertue followeth oftest noble blood: the more frequently that your court can be garnished with them, as peers and fathers of your land, thinke it the more your honour."

He impresses on the mind of the prince ever to embrace the quarrel of the poor and the sufferer, and to remember the honourable title given to his grandfather, in being called "The poor man's king."

OF COLONISING.

James I. had a project of improving the state of those that dwelt in the isles, "who are so utterly barbarous," by intermixing some of the semi-civilised Highlanders, and planting colonies among them of inland subjects.

"I have already made laws against the overlords, and the chief of their clannes, and it would be no difficultie to danton them; so rooting out, or transporting the barbarous and stubborn sort, and planting civilised in their rooms."

This was as wise a scheme as any modern philosopher could have suggested, and, with the conduct he subsequently pursued in Ireland, may be referred to as splendid proofs of the kingly duties so zealously performed by this monarch.

OF MERCHANTS.

Of merchants, as this king understood the commercial character, he had no honourable notion.

He says, "They think the whole commonwealth ordained for raising them up, and accounting it their lawful gain to enrich themselves upon the losses of the rest of the people."

We are not to censure James I. for his principles of political economy, which then had not assumed the dignity of a science; his rude and simple ideas convey popular truths.

REGULATIONS FOR THE PRINCE'S MANNERS AND HABITS.

The last portion of the Basilicon Doron is devoted to domestic regulations for the prince, respecting his manners and habits; which the king calls "the indifferent actions of a man."

"A king is set as one on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures all the people gazinglie do behold; and, however just in the discharge of his office, yet, if his behaviour be light or dissolute, in indifferent actions, the people, who see but the outward part, conceive pre-occupied conceits of the king's inward intention, which, although with time, the trier of all truth, will evanish by the evidence of the contrarie effect, yet, *interim patitur justus*, and pre-judged conceits will, in the mean time, breed contempt, the mother of rebellion and disorder. Besides," the king adds, "the indifferent actions and behaviour of a man have a certain holding and dependence upon vertue or vice, according as they are used or ruled."

The prince is not to keep regular hours,

"That any time in the four and twentie hours may be alike to you; thereby your diet may be accommodated to your affairs, and not your affairs to your diet."

The prince is to eat in public, "to shew that he loves not to haunt companie, which is one of the marks of a tyrant, and that he delights not to eat privatelie, ashamed of his gluttonie." As a curious instance of the manners of the times, the king advises the prince "to use mostly to eat of reasonablie-grosse and common meats; not only for making your bodie strong for travel, as that ye may be the hartlier received by your meane subiects in their houses, when their cheere may suffice you, which otherwaies would be imputed to you for pride, and breed coldness and disdain in them."

I have noticed his counsel against the pedantry or other affectations of style in speaking.

He adds, "Let it be plaine, natural, comelie, cleane, short, and sententious."

In his gestures "he is neither to look sillily, like a stupid pedant; nor unsettledly, with an uncouth morgue, like a new-come-over cavalier; not over sparing in your courtesies, for that will be imputed to incivilitie and arrogance; nor yet over prodigal in jowking or nodding at every step, for that forme of being popular becometh better, aspiring Absaloms than lawful kings; forming ever your gesture according to your present action; looking gravely, and with a majestie, when ye sit upon judgment, or give audience to embassadors; homely, when ye are in private with your own servants; merrily, when ye are at any pastime, or merry discourse: and let your countenance smell of courage and magnanimity when at the warres. And remember (I say again) to be plaine and sensible in your language; for besides, it is the tongue's office to be the messenger of the mind; it may be thought a point of imbecilitie of spirit, in a king to speak obscurely, much more untrewely, as if he stood in awe of any in uttering his thoughts."

Should the prince incline to be an author, the king adds—

"If your engine (genius) spur you to write any

workes, either in prose or verse, I cannot but allow you to practise it; but take no longsome works in hande, for distracting you from your calling."

He reminds the prince with dignity and truth, "Your writes (writings) will remain as the true picture of your minde, to all posterities; if yee would write worthelie, chuse subjects worthie of you." His critical conception of the nature of poetry is its best definition. "If ye write in verse, remember that it is not the principal part of a poem to rime right, and flow well with many prettie wordes; but the chief commendation of a poem is, that when the verse shall bee taken sundry in prose, it shall be found so ritch in quick inventions and poetick floures, and in fair and pertinent comparisons, as it shall retain the lustre of a poem although in prose."

The king proceeds touching many curious points concerning the prince's bodily exercises and "house-pastimes." A genuine picture of the customs and manners of the age: our royal author had the eye of an observer, and the thoughtfulness of a sage.

The king closes with the hope that the prince's "natural inclination will have a happie simpathie with these precepts; making the wise man's schoolmaister, which is the example of others, to be your teacher; and not that overlate repentance by your own experience, which is the schoolmaister of fools."

Thus have I opened the book, and I believe, the heart of James I. The volume remains a perpetual witness to posterity of the intellectual capacity and the noble disposition of the royal author.

But this monarch has been unfairly reproached, both by the political and religious; as far as these aspersions connect themselves with his character, they enter into our inquiry.

His speeches and his writings are perpetually quoted by democratic writers, with the furious zeal of those who are doing the work of a party; they never separate the character of James from his speculative principles of government; and, such is the odium they have raised against him, that this sovereign has received the execration, or the ridicule, even of those who do not belong to their party. James maintained certain abstract doctrines of the times, and had written on "The Prerogative Royal," and "The Trew Laws of Free Monarchies," as he had on witches and devils. All this verbal despotism is artfully converted into so many acts of despotism itself; and thus they contrive their dramatic exhibition of a blustering tyrant, in the person of a father of his people, who exercised his power without an atom of brutal despotism adhering to it.

THE KING'S IDEA OF THE ROYAL PREROGATIVE.

When James asserted that a king is above the laws, he did not understand this in the popular sense; nor was he the inventor or the reviver of similar doctrines. In all his mysterious flights on the nature of "The Prerogative Royal," James only maintained what Elizabeth and all the Tudors had, as jealously, but more energetically exercised*. Elizabeth left to her successor the royal prerogative strained to its highest pitch, with no means to support a throne which in the succeeding reign was found to be baseless. The king employed the style of absolute power, and, as Harris says, "entertained notions of his prerogative amazingly great, and bordering on impiety." It never occurred to his calumniators, who are always writing, without throwing themselves back into the age of their inquiries, that all the political reveries, the abstract notions, and the metaphysical fancies of James I. arose from his studious desire of being an English sovereign, according to the English constitution—for from thence he derived those very ideas.

THE LAWYERS' IDEA OF THE ROYAL PREROGATIVE.

The truth is, that lawyers, in their anxiety to define, or to defend the shadowy limits of the royal prerogative, had contrived some strange and clumsy fictions to describe its powers; their flatteries of the imaginary being, whom they called the sovereign, are more monstrous than all the harmless abstractions of James I.

They describe an English sovereign as a mysterious being, invested with absolute perfection and a fabulous immortality, whose person was inviolable by its sacredness. A king of England is not subject to death, since the sovereign is a corporation, expressed by the awful plural the our

* In Sir Symund D'Ewes's Journals of the Parliament, and in Townshend's Historical Collections, we trace in some degree Elizabeth's arbitrary power concealed in her prerogative, which she always considered as the dissolving charm in the magical circle of our constitution. But I possess two letters of the French ambassador to Charles IX. written from our court in her reign; who, by means of his secret intercourse with those about her person, details a curious narrative of a royal interview granted to some deputies of the parliament, at that moment refractory, strongly depicting the exalted notions this great sovereign entertained of the prerogative, and which she asserted in stamping her foot.

and the WE. His majesty is always of full age, though in infancy; and so unlike mortality, the king can do no wrong. Such his ubiquity, that he acts at the same moment in different places; and such the force of his testimony, that whatever the sovereign declares to have passed in his presence, becomes instantly a perpetual record; he serves for his own witness, by the simple subscription of *Teste me ipso*; and he is so absolute in power, beyond the laws, that he quashes them by his negative voice*. Such was the origin of the theoretical prerogative of an ideal sovereign, which James I. had formed: it was a mere curious abstraction of the schools in the spirit of the age, which was perpetually referring to the mysteries of state and the secrets of empires, and not a principle he was practising to the detriment of the subject.

James I. while he held for his first principle that a sovereign is only accountable to God for the sins of his government, a harmless and even a noble principle in a religious prince, at various times acknowledged that "a king is ordained for procuring the prosperity of his people." In his speech, 1603, he says,

"If you be rich I cannot be poor; if you be happy I cannot but be fortunate. My worldly felicity consists in your prosperity. And that I am a servant is most true, as I am a head and governour of all the people in my dominions. If we take the people as one body, then as the head is ordained for the body and not the body for the head, so must a righteous king know himself to be ordained for his people, and not his people for him."

The truth is always concealed by those writers who are cloaking their antipathy against monarchy, in their declamations against the writings of James I. Authors, who are so often influenced by the opinions of their age, have the melancholy privilege of perpetuating them, and of being cited as authorities for those very opinions, however erroneous.

At this time the true principles of popular liberty, hidden in the constitution, were yet obscure and contested; involved in contradiction, in assertion, and recantation †; and they have been established as much by the blood as by the ink of our patriots. Some noble spirits in the Commons were then struggling to fix the vacillating principles of our government; but often their private passions were infused into their public feelings; James, who was apt to imagine that these individuals were instigated by a personal enmity in aiming at his mysterious prerogative, and at the same time found their rivals with equal weight opposing the novel opinions, retreated still farther into the depths and arcana of the constitution. Modern writers have viewed the political fancies of this monarch through optical instruments not invented in his days.

When Sir Edward Coke declared that the king's royal prerogative being unlimited and undefined, "was a great overgrown monster;" and, on one occasion, when Coke said before the king, that "his Majesty was defended by the laws,"—James in anger told him he spoke foolishly, and he said he was not defended by the laws, but by God (alluding to his "divine right"); and sharply reprimanded him for having spoken irreverently of Sir Thomas Crompton, a civilian; asserting, that Crompton was as good a man as Coke. The fact is, there then existed a rivalry between the civil and the common lawyers. Coke declared that the common law of England was in imminent danger of being perverted; that law which he has enthusiastically described as the perfection of all sense and experience. Coke was strenuously opposed by Lord Bacon and by the civilians, and was at length committed to the Tower (according to a MS. letter of the day, for the cause is obscure in our history), "charged with speaking so in parliament, as tended to stir up the subjects' hearts against their sovereign ‡." Yet in all this we

* Such are the descriptions of the British sovereign, to be found in Cowell's curious book, entitled "The Interpreter." The reader may further trace the modern genius of Blackstone, with an awful reverence, dignifying the venerable nonsense—and the commentator on Blackstone sometimes labouring to explain the explanations of his master; so obscure, so abstract, and so delicate, is the phantom which our ancient lawyers conjured up, and which the moderns cannot lay.

† Cowell, equally learned and honest, involved himself in contradictory positions, and was alike prosecuted by the King and the Commons, on opposite principles. The overbearing Coke seems to have aimed at his life, which the lenity of James saved. His work is a testimony of the unsettled principles of liberty at that time; Cowell was compelled to appeal to one part of his book to save himself from the other.

‡ The following anecdotes of Lord Chief Justice Coke have not been published. They are extracts from manuscript letters of the times: on that occasion, at first, the patriot did not conduct himself with the firmness of a great spirit.

Nov. 19, 1616.

"The thunderbolt hath fallen on the Lord Coke, which hath overthrown him from the very roots. The supersedeas was carried to him by Sir George

must not regard James as the despot he is represented: he acted as Elizabeth would have acted, for the sacredness of his own person, and the integrity of the constitution. In the same manuscript letter I find that, when at Theobald's, the king with his usual openness was discoursing how he designed to govern; and as he would sometimes, like the wits of all nations and times, compress an argument into a play on words,—the king said, "I will govern according to the good of the *common-weal*, but not according to the *common-will!*"

Coppin, who, at the presenting of it, received it with dejection and tears. *Tremor et successio non cadunt in fortem et constantem.* I send you a distich on the Lord Coke.

Jus condere Cocus potuit, sed condere jure
Non potuit; potuit condere jura cocis."

It happened that the name of Coke, or rather Cook, admitted of being punned on, both in Latin and in English: for he was lodged in the Tower, in a room that had once been a kitchen, and, as soon as he arrived, one had written on the door, which he read at his entrance—

"This room has long wanted a Cook."

"The prince interceding lately for *Edward Coke*, his Majesty answered, 'He knew no such man.' When the prince interceded by the name of Mr. Coke, his Majesty still answered, 'He knew none of that name neither; but he knew there was one Captain Coke, the leader of the faction in parliament.'"

In another letter, Coke appears with greater dignity.—When Lord Arundel was sent by the king to Coke, a prisoner in the Tower, to inform him that his Majesty would allow him to consult with eight of the best learned in the law, to advise him for his cause; Coke thanked the king, but he knew himself to be accounted to have as much skill in the law as any man in England, and therefore needed no such help, nor feared to be judged by the law. He knew his Majesty might easily find, in such a one as he, whereby to take away his head, but for this he feared not what could be said.

"I have heard you affirm," said Lord Arundel, "that by law, he that should go about to withdraw the subjects' hearts from their king, was a traitor."—Sir Edward answered, "That he held him an arch-traitor."

James I. said of Coke, "That he had so many shifts that, throw him where you would, he still fell upon his legs."

This affair ended with putting Sir Edward Coke on his knees before the council-table, with an order to retire to a private life, to correct his book of Reports, and occasionally to consult the king himself.—This part of Coke's history is fully opened in Mr. Alexander Chalmers's Biog. Dictionary.

THE KING'S ELEVATED CONCEPTION OF THE KINGLY CHARACTER.

But what were the real thoughts and feelings of this presumed despot concerning the duties of a sovereign? His Platonic conceptions inspired the most exalted feelings; but his gentle nature never led to one act of unfeeling despotism. His sceptre was wreathed with the roses of his fancy: the iron of arbitary power only struck into the heart in the succeeding reign. James only menaced with an abstract notion; or, in anger, with his own hand would tear out a protestation from the journals of the Commons: and, when he considered a man as past forgiveness, he condemned him to a slight imprisonment; or removed him to a distant employment; or, if an author, like Coke and Cowell, sent him into retirement to correct his works.

In a great court of judicature, when the interference of the royal authority was ardently solicited, the magnanimous monarch replied:—

"Kings ruled by their laws, as God did by the laws of nature; and ought as rarely to put in use their supreme authority as God does his power of working miracles."

Notwithstanding his abstract principles, his knowledge and reflection showed him that there is a crisis in monarchies and a period in empires; and in discriminating between a king and a tyrant, he tells the prince—

"A tyranne's miserable and infamous life armeth in end his own subiects to become his burreaux; and although this rebellion be ever unlawful on their part, yet is the world so wearied of him, that his fall is little meaned (minded) by the rest of his subiects, and smiled at by his neighbours."

And he desires that the prince, his son, should so perform his royal duties, that, "in case ye fall in the highway, yet it should be with the honourable report and just regret of all honest men." In the dedicatory sonnet to Prince Henry of the Basilicon Doron, in verses not without elevation, James admonishes the prince to

"Represse the proud, maintaining aye the right;
Walk always so, as ever in his sight,
Who guards the godly, plaguing the prophane."

The poems of James I. are the versifications of a man of learning and meditation. Such an one could not fail of producing lines which reflect the mind of their author. I find in a MS. these

couplets, which condense an impressive thought on his favourite subject:—

"Crownes have their compasse, length of daies their date,
Triumphs their tombes, Felicitie her fate;
Of more than earth, can earth make none partaker;
But knowledge makes the king most like his Maker*."

These are among the elevated conceptions the king had formed of the character of a sovereign, and the feeling was ever present in his mind. James has preserved an anecdote of Henry VIII., in commenting on it, which serves our purpose:—

"It was strange," said James I., "to look into the life of Henry VIII., how like an epicure he lived! Henry once asked, whether he might be saved? He was answered, 'That he had no cause to fear, having lived so mighty a king.'—'But, oh!' said he, 'I have lived too like a king.' He should rather have said, not like a king—for the office of a king is to do justice and equity; but he only served his sensuality, like a beast."

Henry VII. was the favourite character of James I.; and it was to gratify the king, that Lord Bacon wrote the life of this wise and prudent monarch. It is remarkable of James I., that he never mentioned the name of Elizabeth without some expressive epithet of reverence; such as, "The late queen of famous memory;" a circumstance not common among kings, who do not like to remind the world of the reputation of a great predecessor. But it suited the generous temper of that man to extol the greatness he admired, whose philosophic toleration was often known to have pardoned the libel on himself for the redeeming virtue of its epigram. In his forgiving temper, James I. would call such effusions "the superfluities of idle brains."

"THE BOOK OF SPORTS."

But while the mild government of this monarch has been covered with the political odium of arbitrary power, he has also incurred a religious one, from his design of rendering the Sabbath a day for the poor alike of devotion and enjoyment, hitherto practised in England, as it is still throughout Europe. Plays were performed on Sundays at court, in Elizabeth's reign; and yet "the Protestants of Elizabeth" was the usual expressive phrase to mark those who did most honour to the reformed. The king, returning from Scotland, found the people in Lancashire discontented, from the unusual deprivation of their popular recreations on Sundays and holidays, after the church-service. "With our own ears we heard the general complaint of our people." The Catholic priests were busily insinuating among the lower orders that the reformed religion was a sullen deprivation of all mirth and social amusements, and thus "turning the people's hearts." But while they were denied what the king terms "lawful recreations†," they had substituted more vicious ones: alehouses were more frequented—drunkenness more general—tale-mongery and sedition, the vices of sedentary idleness, prevailed—while a fanatical gloom was spreading over the country.

The king, whose gaiety of temper instantly sympathised with the multitude, and perhaps alarmed at this new shape which puritanism was assuming, published what is called "The Book of Sports," and which soon obtained the contemptuous term of "The Dancing Book."

On this subject, our recent principles have hitherto governed our decisions: with our habits formed, and our notions finally adjusted, this singular state-paper has been reprobated by piety; whose zeal, however, is not sufficiently historical. It was one of the state-maxims of this philosophic monarch, in his advice to his son,

"To allure the common people to a common amitie among themselves; and that certain daies in the yeere should be appointed for delighting the people with public spectacles of all honest games and exercise of arms; making playes and lawful games in Maie, and good cheare at Christmas; as also for convening of neighbours, for entertaining friendship and heartliness, by honest feasting and merriness; so that the sabbothes be kept holie, and no unlawful pastime be used. This form of contenting the people's minds hath been used in all well-governed republics."

James, therefore, was shocked at the sudden melancholy among the people. In Europe, even among the reformed themselves, the Sabbath, after church-service, was a festival-day; and the wise monarch could discover no reason why, in his kingdom, it should prove a day of penance and self-denial: but when once this unlucky "Book of Sports" was thrown among the nation, they discovered, to their own astonishment, that everything concerning the nature of the Sabbath was uncertain.

* Harl. MSS., 6824.

† These are enumerated to consist of dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting, May-games, Whitsun-ales, Morris-dances, and the setting up of May-poles, and other manly sports.

THE SABBATARIAN CONTROVERSY.

And, because they knew nothing, they wrote much. The controversy was carried to an extremity in the succeeding reign. The proper hour of the Sabbath was not agreed on: Was it to commence on the Saturday-eve? Others thought that time, having a circular motion, the point we begin at was not important, provided the due portion be completed. Another declared, in his "Sunday no Sabbath," that it was merely an ecclesiastical day which may be changed at pleasure; as they were about doing it, in the Church of Geneva, to Thursday,—probably from their antipathy to the Catholic Sunday, as the early Christians had anciently changed it from the Jewish Saturday. This had taken place, had the Thursday voters not formed the minority. Another asserted, that Sunday was a working day, and that Saturday was the perpetual Sabbath *. Some deemed the very name of Sunday profaned the Christian mouth, as allusive to the Saxon idolatry of that day being dedicated to the Sun; and hence they sanctified it with the "Lord's-day." Others were strenuous advocates for closely copying the austerity of the Jewish Sabbath, in all the rigour of the Levitical law; forbidding meat to be dressed, houses swept, fires kindled, &c.,—the day of rest was to be a day of mortification. But this spread an alarm, that "the old rotten ceremonial law of the Jews, which had been buried in the grave of Jesus," was about to be revived. And so prone is man to the reaction of opinion, that, from observing the Sabbath with a Judaic austerity, some were for rejecting "Lord's-days" altogether; asserting, they needed not any; because, in their elevated holiness, all days to them were Lord's-days †. A popular preacher at the Temple, who was disposed to keep alive a cheerful spirit among the people, yet desirous that the sacred day should not pass like any other, moderated between the parties. He declared it was to be observed with strictness only by "persons of quality ‡."

One of the chief causes of the civil war is traced to the revival of this "Book of Sports." Thus it happened that from the circumstance of our good-tempered monarch discovering the populace in Lancashire discontented, being debarred from their rustic sports—and, exhorting them, out of his *bonhommie*, and "fatherly love, which he owed to them all," (as he said) to recover their cheerful habits—he was innocently involving the country in divinity, and in civil war. James I. would have started with horror at the "Book of Sports," could he have presciently contemplated the archbishop, and the sovereign who persisted to revive it, dragged to the block. What invisible threads suspend together the most remote events!

The parliament's armies usually chose Sundays for their battles, that the profanation of the day might be expiated by a field-sacrifice, and that the Sabbath-breakers should receive a signal punishment. The opinions of the nature of the Sabbath were, even in the succeeding reign, so opposite and novel, that plays were performed before Charles on Sundays. James I. who knew nothing of such opinions, has been unjustly aspersed by those who live in more settled times, when such matters have been more wisely established than ever they were discussed §.

* Collier's Eccl. Hist., vol. ii. p. 758.

† Fuller's Church Hist., book xi. p. 149. One of the most curious books of this class is Heylin's "History of the Sabbath;" a work abounding with uncommon researches; it was written in favour of Charles's declaration for reviving lawful sports on Sundays. Warton in the *first* edition of Milton's Juvenile Poems, observed in a note on the Lady's speech, in Comus, verse 177, that "it is owing to the Puritans ever since Cromwell's time that *Sunday* has been made in England a day of gravity and severity: and many a staunch observer of the rites of the Church of England little suspects that he is conforming to the *Calvinism* of an *English Sunday*." It is probable this gave unjust offence to grave heads unfurnished with their own national history—for in the *second edition* Warton cancelled the note. Truth is thus violated. The Puritans, disgusted with the levities and excesses of the age of James and Charles, as is usual on these points, vehemently threw themselves into an opposite direction; but they perhaps advanced too far in converting the Sabbath-day into a sullen and gloomy reserve of pharisaical austerity. Adam Smith, and Paley, in his "Moral and Political Philosophy," vol. ii. p. 73, have taken more enlightened views on this subject.

‡ "Let servants," he says, "whose hands are ever working, whilst their eyes are waking; let such who all the foregoing week had their cheeks moistened with sweat, and their hands hardened with labour, let such have some recreations on the Lord's-day indulged to them; whilst *persons of quality*, who may be said to keep Sabbath all the week long—I mean, who rest from hard labour—are concerned in conscience to observe the Lord's-day with the greater abstinence from recreations."

§ It is remarkable of James I. that he never pressed for the performance of any of his proclamations; and his facile disposition made him more tolerant than appears in our history. At

MOTIVES OF THE KING'S AVERSION TO WAR.

THE king's aversion to war has been attributed to his pusillanimity—as if personal was the same thing as political courage, and as if a king placed himself in a field of battle by a proclamation for war. The idle tale that James trembled at the mere view of a naked sword, which is produced as an instance of the effects of sympathy over the infant in the womb from his mother's terror at the assassination of Rizzio, is probably not true, yet it serves the purpose of inconsiderate writers to indicate his excessive pusillanimity; but there is another idle tale of an opposite nature which is certainly true:—In passing from Berwick into his new kingdom, the king, with his own hand, "shot out of a cannon so fayre and with so great judgment" as convinced the cannoniers of the king's skill "in great artillery," as Stowe records. It is probable, after all, that James I. was not deficient in personal courage, although this is not of consequence in his literary and political character. Several instances are recorded of his intrepidity. But the absurd charge of his pusillanimity and his pedantry has been carried so far, as to suppose that it affected his character as a sovereign. The warm and hasty Burnet says at once of James I.:—"He was despised by all abroad as a pedant without true judgment, courage, or steadiness." This "pedant," however, had "the true judgment and steadiness" to obtain his favourite purpose, which was the preservation of a continued peace. If James I. was sometimes despised by foreign powers, it was because an insular king, who will not consume the blood and treasure of his people (and James had neither to spare), may be little regarded on the Continent; the Machiavels of foreign cabinets will look with contempt on the domestic blessings a British sovereign would scatter among his subjects; his presence with the foreigners is only felt in his armies; and they seek to allure him to fight their battles, and to involve him in their interests.

James looked with a cold eye on the military adventurer: he said, "No man gains by war but he that hath not wherewith to live in peace." But there was also a secret motive, which made the king a lover of peace, and which he once thus confidentially opened:—

"A king of England had no reason but to seek always to decline a war; for though the sword was indeed in his hand, the purse was in the people's. One could not go without the other. Suppose a supply were levied to begin the fray, what certainty could he have that he should not want sufficient to make an honourable end? If he called for subsidies, and did not obtain, he must retreat ingloriously. He must beg an alms, with such conditions as would break the heart of majesty, through capitulations that *some members would make, who desire to improve the reputation of their wisdom, by retrenching the dignity of the crown in popular declamations*, and thus he must buy the soldier's pay, or fear the danger of a mutiny*."

JAMES ACKNOWLEDGES HIS DEPENDENCE ON THE COMMONS.—THEIR CONDUCT.

THUS James I. perpetually accused of exercising arbitrary power, confesses a humiliating dependence on the Commons; and, on the whole, at a time when prerogative and privilege were alike indefinite and obscure, the king received from them hard and rigorous usage. A king of peace claimed the indulgence, if not the gratitude, of the people; and the sovereign who was zealous to correct the abuses of his government, was not distinguished, by the Commons, from him who insolently would perpetuate them.

When the Commons were not in good humour with Elizabeth, or James, they contrived three methods of inactivity, running the time to waste —*nihil agendo*, or *aliud agendo*, or *malè agendo*; doing nothing, doing something else, or doing evilly†. In one of these irksome moments, wait-

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this very time, the conduct of a lord-mayor of London has been preserved by Wilson, as a proof of the city magistrate's piety, and, it may be added, of his wisdom. It is here adduced as an evidence of the king's usual conduct:—

The king's carriages, removing to Theobald's on the Sabbath, occasioned a great clatter and noise in the time of divine service. The lord-mayor commanded them to be stopped, and the officers of the carriages, returning to the king, made violent complaints. The king, in a rage, swore he thought there had been no more kings in England than himself; and sent a warrant to the lord-mayor to let them pass, which he obeyed, observing, "While it was in my power, I did my duty; but that being taken away by a higher power, it is my duty to obey." The good sense of the lord-mayor so highly gratified James, that the king complimented him, and thanked him for it. Of such gentleness was the arbitrary power of James composed!

* Hacket's Life of Lord-Keeper Williams, p. 80. The whole is distinguished by italics, as the king's own words.

† I find this description in a MS. letter of the times.

ing for subsidies, Elizabeth anxiously inquired of the speaker, "What had passed in the lower house?" He replied, "If it please your Majesty —seven weeks." On one of those occasions, when the queen broke into a passion when they urged her to a settlement of the succession, one of the deputies of the Commons informed her Majesty, that "the Commons would never *speak* about a subsidy, or any other matter whatever; and that hitherto nothing but the most trivial discussions had passed in Parliament: which was, therefore, a great assembly rendered entirely useless,—and all were desirous of returning home*."

But the more easy and open nature of James I. endured greater hardships: with the habit of studious men, the king had an utter carelessness of money and a generosity of temper, which Hacket, in his Life of the Lord-Keeper Williams, has described. "The king was wont to give like a king, and for the most part to keep one act of liberality warm with the covering of another." He seemed to have had no distinct notions of total amounts; he was once so shocked at the sight of the money he had granted away, lying in heaps on a table, that he instantly reduced it to half the sum. It appears that Parliament never granted even the ordinary supplies they had given to his predecessors; his chief revenue was drawn from the customs; yet his debts, of which I find an account in the parliamentary history, after a reign of twenty-one years, did not amount to 200,000*l*†. This monarch could not have been so wasteful of his revenues as it is presumed. James I. was always generous, and left scarcely any debts. He must have lived amidst many self-deprivations; nor was this difficult to practise for this king, for he was a philosopher, indifferent to the common and imaginary wants of the vulgar of royalty. Whenever he threw himself into the arms of his Parliament, they left him without a feeling of his distress. In one of his speeches he says,

"In the last Parliament I laid open the true thoughts of my heart; but I may say, with our Saviour, 'I have piped to you, and you have not danced; I have mourned, and you have not lamented.' I have reigned eighteen years, in which time you have had peace, and I have received far less supply than hath been given to any king since the Conquest."

Thus James, denied the relief he claimed, was forced on wretched expedients, selling patents for monopolies, craving benevolences, or free gifts, and such expedients; the monopolies had been usual in Elizabeth's reign; yet all our historians agree, that his subjects were never grievously oppressed by such occasional levies; this was even the confession of the contemporaries of this monarch. They were every day becoming wealthier by those acts of peace they despised the monarch for maintaining. "The kingdom, since his reign began, was luxuriant in gold and silver, far above the scant of our fathers who lived before us," are the words of a contemporary‡. All flourished about the king, except the king himself. James I. discovered how light and hollow was his boasted "prerogative-royal," which, by its power of dissolving the Parliament, could only keep silent those who had already refused their aid.

A wit of the day described the Parliaments of James by this ludicrous distich:

"Many faults complained of, few things amended,
A subsidy granted, the Parliament ended."

But this was rarely the fact. Sometimes they addressed James I. by what the king called a "stinging-petition;" or, when the ministers, passing over in silence the motion of the Commons, pressed for supplies, the heads of a party replied, that to grant them were to put an end to Parliament. But they practised expedients and contrivances, which comported as little with the dignity of an English senate, as with the majesty of the sovereign.

At a late hour, when not a third part of the house remained, and those who required a fuller house, amid darkness and confusion, were neither seen nor heard, they made a protest,—of which the king approved as little of the ambiguous matter, as the surreptitious means; and it was then, that, with his own hand, he tore the leaf out of the journal§. In the sessions of 1614 the king was still more indignant at their proceedings. He and the Scotch had been vilified by their invectives; and they were menaced by two lawyers, with "a Sicilian vespers, or a Parisian matins." They aimed to reduce the king to beggary, by calling in question a third part of his revenue, contesting his prerogative in levying his customs. On this occasion I find that, publicly in the Banqueting-house at Whitehall, the king tore all their bills before their faces; and, as not a single act was passed, in the phrase of the day this was called an *addle* Parliament‖. Such unhappy proceedings indicated the fatal divisions of the succeeding reign. A meeting, of a different complexion, once occurred in 1621, late in James's reign. The

* From a MS. letter of the French ambassador, La Mothe Fenelon, to Charles IX., then at the court of London, in my possession.

† Parl. Hist. vol. v. p. 147.

‡ Hacket's Life of Lord-Keeper Williams.

§ Rushworth, vol. i. p. 54.

‖ From a MS. letter of the times.

monopolies were then abolished. The king and the prince shed reciprocal tears in the house; and the prince wept when he brought an affectionate message of thanks from the Commons. The letter-writer says, "It is a day worthy to be kept holiday; some say it shall, but I believe them not." It never was; for even this parliament broke up with the cries of "some tribunitial orators," as James designated the pure and the impure democratic spirits. Smollett remarks in his margin, that the king endeavoured to *cajole* the Commons. Had he known of the royal tears, he had still heightened the phrase. Hard fate of kings! Should ever their tears attest the warmth of honest feelings, they must be thrown out of the pale of humanity: for Francis Osborne, that cynical republican, declares, that "there are as few abominable princes as tolerable kings; because princes must court the public favour before they attain supreme power, and then change their nature!" Such is the egotism of republicanism!

SCANDALOUS CHRONICLES.

The character of James I. has always been taken from certain scandalous chronicles, whose origin requires detection. It is this mud which has darkened and disturbed the clear stream of history. The reigns of Elizabeth and James teemed with libels in church and state from opposite parties: the idleness of the pacific court of James I. hatched a viperous brood of a less hardy, but perhaps of a more malignant nature, than the Martin Mar-prelates of the preceding reign. Those boldly at once wrote treason, and, in some respects, honestly dared the rope which could only silence Penry and his party; but these only reached to *scandalum magnatum*, and the puny wretches could only have crept into a pillory. In the times of the commonwealth, when all things were agreeable which vilified our kings, these secret histories were dragged from their lurking holes. The writers are meagre Suetoniuses and Procopiuses; a set of self-elected spies in the court; gossippers, lounging in the same circle; eaves-droppers; pryers into corners; buzzers of reports; and punctual scribes of what the French (so skilful in the profession) technically term, *les on dit*; that is, things that might never have happened, although they are recorded: registered for posterity in many a scandalous chronicle, they have been mistaken for histories; and include so many truths and falsehoods, that it becomes unsafe for the historian either to credit or to disbelieve them*.

Such was the race generated in this court of peace and indolence! And Hacket, in his Life of the Lord-Keeper Williams, without disguising the

* Most of these works were meanly printed, and were usually found in a state of filth and rags, and would have perished in their own merited neglect, had they not been recently splendidly reprinted by Sir Walter Scott. Thus the garbage has been cleanly laid on a fashionable epergne, and found quite to the taste of certain lovers of authentic history! Sir Anthony Weldon, clerk of the King's kitchen, in his "Court of King James" has been reproached for gaining much of his scandalous chronicle from the purlieus of the court. For this work and some similar ones, especially "The None-Such Charles," in which it would appear that he had procured materials from the State Paper Office, and for other zealous services to the Parliament, they voted him a grant of £500. "The five years of King James," which passes under the name of Sir Fulk Greville, the dignified friend of the romantic Sir Philip Sidney, and is frequently referred to by grave writers, is certainly a Presbyterian's third day's hash,—for there are parts copied from Arthur Wilson's History of James I. who was himself the pensioner of a disappointed courtier; yet this writer never attacks the personal character of the king, though charged with having scraped up many tales maliciously false.—Osborne is a misanthropical politician, who cuts with the most corroding pen that ever rottened a man's name. James was very negligent in dress; graceful appearances did not come into his studies.—Weldon tells us how the king was trussed on horseback, and fixed there like a pedlar's pack, or a lump of inanimate matter; the truth is, the king had always an infirmity in his legs. Further we are told, that this ridiculous monarch allowed his hat to remain just as it chanced to be placed on his head.—Osborne once saw this unlucky king "in a green hunting dress, with a feather in his cap, and a horn, instead of a sword, by his side; how suitable to his age, calling, or person, I leave others to judge from his pictures:" and this he bitterly calls "leaving him dressed for posterity!" This is the style which passes for history with some readers.—Hume observes, that "hunting," which was James's sole recreation, necessary for his health, as a sedentary scholar, "is the cheapest a king can indulge;" and, indeed, the empty coffers of this monarch afforded no other.

These pseudo-histories are alluded to by Arthur Wilson, as "monstrous satires against the king's own person, that haunted both court and country," when, in the wantonness of the times, "every little miscarriage, exuberantly branched, so that evil report did often perch on them."—Fuller has

fact, tells us, that the Lord Keeper "spared not for cost to purchase the most certain intelligence, by his fee'd pensioners, of *every hour's occurrences at court*; and was wont to say, that no man could be a statesman without a great deal of money."

We catch many glimpses of these times in another branch of the same family. When news-books, as the first newspapers were called, did not yet exist to appease the hungering curiosity of the country, a voluminous correspondence was carried on between residents in the metropolis and their country friends: these letters chiefly remain in their MS. state *. Great men then employed a scribe who had a talent this way, and sometimes a confidential friend, to convey to them the secret history of the times; and, on the whole, they are composed by a better sort of writers: for, as they had no other design than to inform their friends of the true state of passing events, they were eager to correct, by subsequent accounts, the lies of the day they sometimes sent down. They have preserved some fugitive events useful in historical researches; but their pens are garrulous,—and it requires some experience to discover the character of the writers, to be enabled to adopt their opinions and their statements. Little things were, however, great matters to these diurnalists; much time was spent in learning of those at court, who had quarrelled, or were on the point; who were seen to have bit their lips, and looked downcast; who was budding, and whose full-blown flower was drooping; then we have the sudden reconcilement and the anticipated fallings out; with a deal of the *pourquoi* of the *pourquoi* †.

Such was this race of gossippers in the environs of a court, where steeped in a supine lethargy of peace, corrupting or corrupted every man stood for himself through a reckless scene of expedients and of compromises.

A PICTURE OF THE AGE FROM A MS. OF THE TIME.

A long reign of peace, which had produced wealth in that age, engendered the extremes of luxury and want. Money traders practised the art of decoying the gallant youths of the day into their nets; and transforming, in a certain time, the estates of the country gentlemen into skins of parchment,

"The wax continuing hard, the acres melting."
MASSINGER.

Projectors and monopolists, who had obtained patents for licensing all the inns and alehouses; for being the sole venders of manufactured articles, such as gold lace, tobacco-pipes, starch, soap, &c., were grinding and cheating the people to an extent which was not at first understood, although the practice had existed in the former reign. The gentry, whose family pride would vie

designated these suspicious scribes as "a generation of the people who, like *moths*, have lurked under the carpets of the council-table, and even like *fleas*, have leaped into pillows of the prince's bed-chamber; and, to enhance the reputation of their knowledge, thence derived that of all things which were, or were not, ever done or thought of."—*Church Hist.* book x. p. 87.

* Mr. Lodge's "Illustrations of British History" is an eminent and elegant work of the *minutiæ historicæ*; as are the more recent volumes of Sir Henry Ellis's valuable collections.

† Some specimens of this sort of correspondence of the idleness of the times may amuse. The learned Mede, to his friend Sir Martin Stuteville, chronicles a fracas:—"I am told of a great falling out between my Lord Treasurer and my Lord Digby, insomuch that they came to *pedlar's blood*, and *traitor's blood*. It was about some money which my Lord Digby should have had, which my Lord Treasurer thought too much for the charge of his employment, and said himself could go in as good a fashion for half the sum. But my Lord Digby replies, that he could not *peddle* so well as his lordship."

A lively genius sports with a fanciful pen in conveying the same kind of intelligence, and so nice in the shades of curiosity, that he can describe a quarrel before it takes place.

"You know the *primum mobile* of our court (Buckingham), by whose motion all the other spheres must move, or else stand still: the bright sun of our firmament, at whose splendour or glooming all our marygolds of the court open or shut. There are in higher spheres as great as he, but none so glorious. But the king is in progress, and we are far from court. Now to hear certainties. It is told me, that my Lord of Pembroke and my Lord of Rochester are so far out, as it is almost come to a quarrel; I know not how true this is, but Sir Thomas Overbury and my Lord of Pembroke have been long jarring, and therefore the other is likely."

Among the numerous MS. letters of this kind, I have often observed the writer uneasy at the scandal he has seasoned his letter with, and concluding earnestly that his letter, after perusal, should be thrown to the flames. A wish which appears to have been rarely complied with; and this may serve as a hint to some to restrain their tattling pens, if they regard their own peace; for, on most occasions of this nature, the letters are rather preserved with peculiar care.

with these *nouveaux riches*, exhausted themselves in rival profusion; all crowded to "upstart London," deserting their country mansions, which were now left to the care of "a poor alms-woman, or a bed-rid beadsman."

In that day, this abandonment of the ancient country hospitality for the metropolis, and this breaking-up of old family establishments, crowded London with new and distinct races of idlers, or, as they would now be called, unproductive members of society. From a contemporary manuscript, one of those spirited remonstrances addressed to the king, which it was probably thought not prudent to publish, I shall draw some extracts, as a forcible picture of the manners of the age*. Masters of ancient families, to maintain a mere exterior of magnificence in dress and equipage in the metropolis, were really at the same time hiding themselves in penury: they thrust themselves into lodgings, and "five or six knights, or justices of peace," with all their retinue, became the inmates of a shopkeeper; yet these gentlemen had once "kept the rusty chimneys of two or three houses smoking, and had been the feeders of twenty or forty serving-men: a single page, with a guarded coat, served their turn now.

"Every one strives to be a Diogenes in his house and an emperor in the streets; not caring if they sleep in a tub, so they may be hurried in a coach; giving that allowance to horses and mares that formerly maintained houses full of men; pinching many a belly to paint a few backs, and burying all the treasures of the kingdom into a few citizens' coffers."

"There are now," the writer adds, "twenty thousand masterless men turned off, who know not this night where to lodge, where to eat tomorrow, and ready to undertake any desperate course."

Yet there was still a more turbulent and dangerous race of idlers, in

"A number of younger brothers, of ancient houses, who, nursed up in fulness, pampered in their minority, and left in charge to their elder brothers, who were to be fathers to them, followed them in despair to London, where these untimely-born youths are left so bare, that their whole life's allowance was consumed in one year."

The same manuscript exhibits a full and spirited picture of manners in this long period of peace.

"The gentry are like owls, all feathers and no flesh; all show, and no substance; all fashion, and no feeding; and fit for no service but masks and May-games. The citizens have dealt with them as it is said the Indians are dealt with; they have given them counterfeit brooches and bugle-bracelets for gold and silver†; pins and peacock feathers for lands and tenements; gilded coaches and outlandish hobby-horses for goodly castles and ancient mansions; their woods are turned into wardrobes, their leases into laces, and their goods and chattels into guarded coats and gaudy toys. Should your Majesty fly to them for relief, you would fare like those birds that peck at painted fruits; all outside." The writer then describes the affected penurious habits of the grave citizens, who were then preying on the country gentlemen:—"When those big swoln leeches, that have thus sucked them, wear rags, eat roots, speak like jugglers that have reeds in their mouths; look like spittle-men, especially when your Majesty hath occasion to use them; their fat lies in their hearts, their substance is buried in their bowels, and he that will have it must first take their lives. Their study is to get, and their chiefest care to conceal; and most from yourself, gracious sir; not a commo-

* The MS. is entitled "Balaam's Ass, or a True Discoverie touching the Murmurs and feared Discontents of the Times, directed to King James." Lansdowne Collection, 209. The writer, throughout, speaks of the king with the highest respect.

† Sir Giles Mompesson and Sir James Mitchell had the monopolies of gold lace, which they sold in a counterfeit state; and, not only cheated the people, but, by a mixture of copper, the ornaments made of it are said to have rotted the flesh. As soon as the grievance was shown to James, he expressed his abhorrence of the practice; and even declared, that no person connected with the villanous fraud should escape punishment. The brother of his favourite, Buckingham, was known to be one, and with Sir Giles Overreach, (as Massinger conceals the name of Mompesson) was compelled to fly the country. The style of James, in his speech, is indeed different from kings' speeches in parliament: he speaks as indignantly as any individual who was personally aggrieved. "Three patents at this time have been complained of, and thought great grievances; my purpose is to strike them all dead, and, that time may not be lost, I will have it done presently. Had these things been complained of to me, before the parliament, I could have done the office of a just king, and have punished them; peradventure more than now ye intend to do. No private person whatsoever, were he ever so dear unto me, shall be respected by me by many degrees as the public good; and I hope, my lords, that ye will do me that right to publish to my people this my heart purposes. Proceed judicially; spare none, where ye find just cause to punish: but remember, that laws have not their eyes in their necks, but in their foreheads."—Rushworth, vol. i. p. 26.

dity comes from their hand, but you pay a noble in the pound for *booking*, which they call *forbearing* *. They think it lost time if they double not their principal in two years. They have attractive powders to draw these flies into their claws; they will entice men with honey into their hives, and with wax entangle them †; they pack the cards, and their confederates, the lords, deal, by which means no other men have ever good game. They have in a few years laid up riches for many, and yet can never be content to say—*Soul, take thy rest, or hand receive no more; do no more wrong:* but still they labour to join house to house, and land to land. What want they of being kings, but the name? Look into the shires and counties, where, with their purchased lordships and manors, one of their private letters has equal power with your Majesty's privy seal ‡. It is better to be one of their hinds, than your Majesty's gentleman usher; one of their grooms, than your guards. What care they, if it be called tribute or no, so long as it comes in termly; or whether their chamber be called Exchequer, or the dens of cheaters, so that the money be left there."

This crushing usury seemed to them a real calamity; for although in the present extraordinary age of calculations and artificial wealth, we can suffer "a dunghill-breed of men," like Mompesson and his contemptible partner of this reign, to accumulate in a rapid period more than a ducal fortune without any apparent injury to the public welfare, the result was different then; the legitimate and enlarged principles of commerce were not practised by our citizens in the first era of their prosperity; their absorbing avarice rapidly took in all the exhausting prodigality of the gentry, who were pushed back on the people to prey in their turn on them; those who found their own acres disappearing, became enclosers of commons; this is one of the grievances which Massinger notices, while the writer of the "Five years of King James" tells us that these discontents between the gentry and commonalty, grew out into a petty rebellion; and it appears by Peyton that "divers of the people were hanged up."

ANECDOTES OF THE MANNERS OF THE AGE.

The minute picture of the domestic manners of this age exhibits the result of those extremes of prodigality and avarice which struck observers in that contracted circle which then constituted society. The king's prodigal dispensations of honours and titles, seem at first to have been political; for James was a foreigner, and designed to create a nobility, as likewise an inferior order, who might feel a personal attachment for the new monarch; but the facility by which titles were acquired, was one cause which occasioned so many to crowd to the metropolis to enjoy their airy honour by a substantial ruin; knighthood had become so common, that some of the most infamous and criminal characters of this age we find in that rank §. The young females, driven to

* The credit which these knavish traders gave their customers, who could not conveniently pay their money down, was carried to an exorbitant charge: since, even in Elizabeth's reign, it was one of the popular grievances brought into parliament—it is there called, "A Bill against *Double Payments* of Book-Debts." One of the country members who made a speech, consisting entirely of proverbs, said, "Pay the reckoning overnight, and you shall not be troubled in the morning."

† In the life of a famous usurer of that day, who died worth £400,000, an amazing sum at that period, we find numberless expedients and contrivances of the money trader, practised on improvident landholders and careless heirs, to entangle them in his nets. He generally contrived to make the wood pay for the land, which he called "making the feathers pay for the goose." He never pressed hard for his loans, but fondly compared his bonds "to infants, which battle best by sleeping;" to battle, is to be nourished—a term still retained in the battle-book of the university. I have elsewhere preserved the character and habits of the money-dealer in the age of James I. —See "Curiosities of Literature," 11th Edit. p. 228.

‡ It is observed, in the same life, that his mortgages, and statutes, and his judgments were so numerous, that his papers would have made a good map of England. A view of the chamber of this usurer is preserved by Massinger, who can only be understood by the modern reader in Mr. Gifford's edition.

Here lay
A manor, bound fast in a skin of parchment;
Here a sure deed of gift for a market-town,
If not redeem'd this day, which is not in
The unthrift's purse; there being scarce one shire
In Wales or England, where my monies are not
Lent out at usury, the certain hook
To draw in more.

Massinger's *City Madam.*

§ A statesman may read with advantage Sir Edward Walker on "The inconveniences that have attended the frequent promotions to Titles, since King James came to the crown." Sir Edward appears not to disapprove of these pro-

necessity by the fashionable ostentation of their parents, were brought to the metropolis as to a market; "where," says a contemporary, "they obtained pensions, or sometimes marriages, by their beauty." When Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, passed to his house, the ladies were at their balconies on the watch, to make themselves known to him; and it appears that every one of those ladies had sold their favours at a dear rate. Among these are some, "who pretending to be *wits*, as they called them," says Arthur Wilson *, "or had handsome nieces or daughters, drew a great resort to their houses." And it appears that Gondomar, to prevent these conversaziones from too freely touching on Spanish politics, sweetened their silence by his presents †. The same grossness of manners was among the higher females of the age; when we see that grave statesman, Sir Dudley Carleton, narrating the adventures of a bridal night, and all "the petty sorceries," the romping of the "great ladies, who were made shorter by the skirts," we discover their coarse tastes; but when we find the king going to the bed of the bride in his night-gown, to give a reveille-matin, and remaining a good time in or upon the bed, "Choose which you will believe;" this bride was not more decent than the ladies who publicly, on their balconies, were soliciting the personal notice of Gondomar.

This coarseness of manners, which still prevailed in the nation, as it had in the court of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, could not but influence the familiar style of their humour and conversation. James I., in the Edict on Duels, employs the expression of *our dearest bed-fellow* to designate the queen; and there was no indelicacy attached to this singular expression. Much of that silly and obscene correspondence of James with Buckingham, while it adds one more mortifying instance of "the follies of the wise," must be attributed to this cause ‡. Are not most of the dramatic works of that day frequently unreadable from this circumstance? As an historian it would be my duty to show how incredibly gross were the domestic language and the domestic familiarities of kings, queens, lords, and ladies, which were much like the lowest of our populace. We may felicitate ourselves on having escaped the grossness, without, however, extending too far these self-congratulations.

The men were dissolved in all the indolence of life and its wantonness; they prided themselves in traducing their own innocence rather than suffer a lady's name to pass unblemished §. The marriage-tie lost its sacredness amid these disorders of social life. The luxurious idlers of that day

motions during the first ten years of his reign, but "when alliance to a favourite, riches though gotten in a shop, persons of private estates, and of families whose fathers would have thought themselves highly honoured to have been but knights in Queen Elizabeth's time, were advanced, then the fruits began to appear. The greater nobility were undervalued; the ancient baronage saw inferior families take precedency over them; nobility lost its respect, and a parity in conversation was introduced which in English dispositions begot contempt; the king could not employ them all, some grew envious, some factious, some ingrateful, however obliged, by being once denied." —P. 302.

* One may conjecture, by this expression, that the term of "wits" was then introduced, in the sense we now use it.

† Wilson has preserved a characteristic trait of one of the lady wits. When Gondomar, one day, in Drury-lane, was passing Lady Jacob's house, she exposing herself for a salutation from him; he bowed, but in return she only opened her mouth, gaping on him. This was again repeated the following day, when he sent a gentleman to complain of her incivility. She replied, that he had purchased some favours of the ladies at a dear rate, and she had a mouth to be stopped as well as others.

‡ Our wonder and surmises have been often raised at the strange subscriptions of Buckingham to the king, "Your dog," and James as ingenuously calling him "dog Steenie." But this was not peculiar to Buckingham; James also called the grave Cecil his "little beagle." The Earl of Worcester, writing to Cecil, who had succeeded in his search after one Bywater, the earl says, "If the *king's beagle* can hunt by land as well as he hath done *by water*, we will leave capping of *Jowler*, and cap the *beagle*." The queen, writing to Buckingham to intercede with the king for Rawleigh's life, addresses Buckingham by "My kind Dog." James appears to have been always playing on some whimsical appellative by which he characterised his ministers and favourites, analogous to the notions of a huntsman. Many of our writers, among them Sir Walter Scott, have strangely misconceived these playful appellatives, unconscious of the origin of this familiar humour. The age was used to the coarseness. We did not then excel all Europe, as Addison set the model, in the delicacy of humour; indeed, even so late as Congreve's time, they were discussing its essential distinction from wit.

§ The expression of one of these gallants, as preserved by Wilson, cannot be decently given, but is more expressive, p. 147.

were polluted with infamous vices; and Drayton in "the Moon-calf," has elaborately drawn full-length pictures of the lady and the gentleman of that day, which seem scarcely to have required the darkening tints of satire to be hideous—in one line the Muse describes "the most prodigious birth:"—

"He's too much woman and She's too much man."

The trades of foppery, in Spanish fashions, suddenly sprung up in this reign, and exhibited new names and new things. Now silk and gold-lace shops first adorned Cheapside, which the continuator of Stowe calls "the beauty of London;" the extraordinary rise in price of these fashionable articles forms a curious contrast with those of the preceding reign. Scarfs, in Elizabeth's time of thirty shillings value, were now wrought up to as many pounds; and embroidered waistcoats, which in the queen's reign no workman knew how to make worth five pounds, were now so rich and curious as to be cheapened at forty. Stowe has recorded a revolution in shoe-buckles, portentously closing in shoe-roses, which were puffed knots of silk, or of precious embroidery, worn even by men of mean rank, at the cost of more than five pounds, who formerly had worn gilt copper shoe-buckles.

In the new and ruinous excess of the use of tobacco, many consumed three or four hundred pounds a year. James, who perceived the inconveniences of this sudden luxury in the nation, tried to discountenance it, although the purpose went to diminish his own scanty revenue. Nor was this attack on the abuse of tobacco peculiar to his Majesty, although he has been so ridiculed for it; a contemporary publication has well described the mania and its consequences. "The smoak of fashion hath quite blown away the smoak of hospitalitie, and turned the chimneys of their forefathers into the noses of their children*." The king also reprobated the finical embarrassments of the new fashions, and seldom wore new clothes. When they brought him a Spanish hat, he flung it away with scorn, swearing he never loved them nor their fashions; and when they put roses on his shoes, he swore too, "that they should not make him a ruffe-footed dove; a yard of penny ribbon would serve that turn."

The sudden wealth which seems to have rushed into the nation in this reign of peace, appeared in massy plate and jewels, and in "prodigal marriage-portions, which were grown in fashion among the nobility and gentry, as if the skies had rained plenty." Such are the words of Hacket, in his Memorial of the Lord-Keeper Williams. Enormous wealth was often accumulated. An usurer died worth £400,000; Sir Thomas Compton, a citizen, left, it is said, £800,000, and his heir was so overcome with this sudden irruption of wealth, that he lost his senses; and Cranfield, a citizen, became the Earl of Middlesex.

The continued peace, which produced this rage for dress, equipage, and magnificence, appeared in all forms of riot and excess; corruption bred corruption. The industry of the nation was not the commerce of the many, but the arts of money-traders, confined to the suckers of the state; and the unemployed and dissipated, who were every day increasing the population in the capital, were a daring petulant race, described by a contemporary as "persons of great expense, who, having run themselves into debt, were constrained to run into faction; and defend themselves from the danger of the law†." These appear to have enlisted under some show of privilege among the nobility; and the metropolis was often shaken by parties, calling themselves Roaring-boys, Bravadoes, Roysters, and Bonaventures‡. Such were some of the turbulent children of peace, whose fiery spirits, could they have found their proper vent, had been soldiers of fortune, as they were younger brothers, distressed often by their own relatives; and wards ruined by their own guardians§; all these were clamorous for bold piracies on the Spaniards: a visionary island, and a secret mine, would often disturb the dreams of these unemployed youths, with whom it was no uncommon practice to take a purse on the road. Such felt that—

——————— in this plenty
And fat of peace, our young men ne'er were train'd
To martial discipline, and our ships unrigg'd
Rot in the harbour. MASSINGER.

The idleness which rusts quiet minds effervesces in fiery spirits pent up together; and the loiterers in the environs of a court, surfeiting with peace, were quick at quarrel. It is remarkable, that in the pacific reign of James I. never was so much blood shed in brawls, nor duels so tremendously barbarous. Hume observed this circumstance, and attributes it to "the turn that the romantic chivalry, for which the nation was formerly so renowned, had lately taken." An

* The Peace-Maker, 1618.

† Five years of King James. Harl. Misc.

‡ A. Wilson's List of James I. p. 28.

§ That ancient oppressive institution of the Court of Wards then existed; and Massinger, the great painter of our domestic manners in this reign, has made it the subject of one of his interesting dramas.

inference probably drawn from the extraordinary duel between Sir Edward Sackville, afterwards Lord Dorset, and the Lord Bruce*. These two gallant youths had lived as brothers, yet could resolve not to part without destroying each other; the narrative, so wonderfully composed by Sackville, still makes us shudder at each blow received and given. Books were published to instruct them by a system of quarrelling, "to teach young gentlemen when they are before-hand and when behind-hand;" thus they incensed and incited those youths of hope and promise, whom Lord Bacon, in his charge on duelling, calls, in the language of the poet, *Auroræ filii*, the sons of the morning,—who often were drowned in their own blood! But, on a nearer inspection, when we discover the personal malignity of these hasty quarrels, the coarseness of their manners, and the choice of weapons and places, in their mode of butchering each other, we must confess that they rarely partake of the spirit of chivalry. One gentleman biting the ear of a templar, or switching a poltroon lord; another sending a challenge to fight in a saw-pit; or to strip to their shirts, to mangle each other, were sanguinary duels, which could only have fermented in the disorders of the times, amid that wanton pampered indolence which made them so petulant and pugnacious. Against this evil his Majesty published a voluminous edict, which exhibits many proofs that it was the labour of his own hand, for the same dignity, the same eloquence, the same felicity of illustration embellish the state-papers†; and to remedy it, James, who rarely consented to shed blood, condemned an irascible lord to suffer the ignominy of the gallows.

But, while extortion and monopoly prevailed among the monied men, and a hollow magnificence among the gentry, bribery had tainted even the lords. All were hurrying on in a stream of venality, dissipation, and want; and the nation, amid the prosperity of the kingdom in a long reign of peace, was nourishing in its breast the secret seeds of discontent and turbulence.

From the days of Elizabeth to those of the Charleses, Cabinet transmitted to Cabinet the caution to preserve the kingdom from the evils of an overgrown metropolis. A political hypochondriacism: they imagined the head was becoming too large for the body, drawing to itself all the moisture of life from the middle and the extremities. A statute against the erection of new buildings was passed by Elizabeth; and from James to his successors proclamations were continually issued to forbid any growth of the city. This singular prohibition may have originated in their dread of infection from the plague, but it certainly became the policy of a weak and timid government, who dreaded, in the enlargement of the metropolis, the consequent concourse of those they designated as "masterless men,"—sedition was as contagious as the plague among the many. But proclamations were not listened to nor read; houses were continually built, for they were in demand,—and the esquires, with their wives and daughters, hastened to gay or busy London, for a knighthood, a marriage, or a monopoly. The government at length were driven to the desperate "Order in Council" to pull down all new houses within ten miles of the metropolis—and further, to direct the Attorney-General to indict all those sojourners in town who had country houses, and mulct them in ruinous fines. The rural gentry were "to abide in their own counties, and by their housekeeping in those parts were to guide and relieve the meaner people *according to the ancient usage of*

* It may be found in the popular pages of the Guardian; there first printed from a MS. in the library of the Harleys.

† "A publication of his Majestie's edict and seuere censure against private combats and combatants, &c. 1613." It is a volume of about 150 pages. As a specimen of the royal style, I transcribe two passages.

"The pride of humours, the libertie of times, the conniuencie of magistrates, together with a kind of prescription of impunity, hath bred ouer all this kingdome, not only an opinion among the weakest, but a constant beleefe among many, that desire to be reputed among the wisest, of a certain freedome left to all men vpon earth by nature, as their *birth-right* to defend their reputations with their swords, and to take reuenge of any wrong either offered or apprehended in that measure, which their owne inward passion or affection doth suggest without any further proofe; so as the challenge be sent in a civil manner, though without leave demanded of the *sovereign*," &c.

The king employs a bold and poetical metaphor to describe duelling—to turn this hawk into a singing-bird, clip its wings, and cage it. "By comparing forraine mischiefes with home-bred accidents, it will not be hard to judge into what region this bolde bird of audacious presumption, in dealing blowes so confidently, will mount, if it bee once let flie, from the breast wherein it lurkes. And therefore it behoveth justice both to keep her still in her own close cage, with care that she learn neuer any other dittie then *Est bene*; but withall, that for preuention of the worst that may fall out, wee clippe her wings, that they grow not too fast. For according to that of the proverb, *It is labour lost to lay nets before the eyes of winged fowles*," &c. p. 13.

the English nation." The Attorney-General, like all great lawyers, looking through the spectacles of his books, was short-sighted to reach to the new causes and the new effects which were passing around. The wisest laws are but foolish when Time, though not the lawyers, has annulled them. The popular sympathy was, however, with the Attorney-General, for it was imagined that the country was utterly ruined and depopulated by the town.

And so in the view it appeared, and so all the satirists chorussed! for in the country the ancient hospitality was not kept up; the crowd of retainers had vanished, the rusty chimneys of the mansion-house hardly smoked through a Christmas week, while in London all was exorbitantly prosperous; masses of treasure were melted down into every object of magnificence. "And is not this wealth drawn from our acres?" was the outcry of the rural censor. Yet it was clear that the country in no way was impoverished, for the land rose in price; and if manors sometimes changed their lords, they suffered no depreciation. A sudden wealth was diffused in the nation; the arts of commerce were first advancing; the first great ship launched for an India voyage, was then named the "Trade's Increase." The town, with its multiplied demands, opened a perpetual market for the country. The money-traders were breeding their hoards as the graziers their flocks; and while the goldsmiths' shops blazed in Cheap, the agriculturists beheld double harvests cover the soil. The innumerable books on agriculture published during these twenty years of peace is an evidence of the improvement of the country—sustained by the growing capitals of the men in trade. In this progress of domestic conveniency to metropolitan luxury, there was a transition of manners; new objects and new interests, and new modes of life, yet in their incipient state.

The evils of these luxuriant times were of quick growth; and, as fast as they sprung, the Father of his people encountered them by his proclamations, which, during long intervals of parliamentary recess, were to be enforced as laws: but they passed away as morning dreams over a happy, but a thoughtless and wanton people.

JAMES THE FIRST DISCOVERS THE DISORDERS AND DISCONTENTS OF A PEACE OF MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS.

The king was himself amazed at the disorders and discontents he at length discovered; and, in one of his later speeches, has expressed a mournful disappointment:

"And now, I confess, that when I looked before upon the face of the government, *I thought, as every man would have done*, that the people were never so happy as in my time; but even, as at divers times I have looked upon many of my coppices, riding about them, and they appeared, on the outside, very thick and well-grown unto me, but, when I turned into the midst of them, I found them all bitten within, and full of plains and bare spots; like the apple or pear, fair and smooth without, but when you cleave it asunder, you find it rotten at heart. Even so this kingdom, the *external* government being as good as ever it was, and I am sure as learned judges as ever it had, and I hope as honest administering justice within it; and for peace, both at home and abroad, more settled, and longer lasting, than ever any before; together with as great plenty as ever: so, as it may be thought, every man might sit in safety under his own vine and fig-tree," &c. &c.*

But while we see this king of peace surrounded by national grievances, and that "this fair coppice was very thick and well-grown," yet loud in murmurs, to what cause are we to attribute them? Shall we exclaim with Catharine Macaulay against "the despotism of James," and "the intoxication of his power?"—a monarch, who did not even enforce the proclamations or edicts his wisdom dictated†; and, as Hume has observed, while vaunting his prerogative, had not a single regiment of guards to maintain it. Must we agree with Hume, and reproach the king with his indolence and love of amusement,—"particularly of hunting‡?"

* Rushworth, vol. i. p. 29; sub anno 1621.

† James I. said, "I will never offer to bring a new custom upon my people without the people's consent; like a good physician tell them what is amiss, if they will not concur to amend it, yet I have discharged my part." Among the difficulties of this king was that of being a foreigner, and amidst the contending factions of that day the "British Solomon" seems to have been unjustly reproached for his Scottish partialities.

‡ La Boderie, the French ambassador, complains of the king's frequent absences; but James did not wish too close an intercourse with one who was making a French party about Prince Henry, and whose sole object was to provoke a Spanish war; the king foiled the French intriguer; but has incurred his contempt for being "timid and irresolute." James's cautious neutrality was no merit in the Frenchman's eye.

La Boderie resided at our court from 1606 to 1611, and his "Ambassades," in 5 vols. are interesting in English history. The most satirical accounts of the domestic life of James, especially in his unguarded hours of boisterous merriment,

THE KING'S PRIVATE LIFE IN HIS OCCASIONAL RETIREMENTS.

THE king's occasional retirements to Royston and Newmarket have even been surmised to have borne some analogy to the horrid Capreæ of Tiberius; but a witness has accidentally detailed the king's uniform life in these occasional seclusions. James I. withdrew at times from public life, but not from public affairs; and hunting, to which he then gave alternate days, was the cheap amusement and requisite exercise of his sedentary habits: but the chase only occupied a few hours. A part of the day was spent by the king in his private studies; another at his dinners, where he had a reader, and was perpetually sending to Cambridge for books of reference; state-affairs were transacted at night; for it was observed, at the time, that his secretaries sat up later at night, in those occasional retirements, than when they were at London*. I have noticed, that the state-papers were composed by himself, that he wrote letters on important occasions without consulting any one; and that he derived little aid from his secretaries. James was probably never indolent; but the uniform life and sedentary habits of literary men usually incur this reproach from those real idlers, who bustle in a life of nothingness. While no one loved more the still-life of peace than this studious monarch, whose habits formed an agreeable combination of the contemplative and the active life, study and business—no king more zealously tried to keep down the growing abuses of his government, by personally concerning himself in the protection of the subject†.

DISCREPANCIES OF OPINION AMONG THE DECRIERS OF JAMES THE FIRST.

LET us detect, among the modern decriers of the character of James I., those contradictory opinions, which start out in the same page; for the conviction of truth flashed on the eyes of those who systematically vilified him, and must often have pained them; while it embarrassed and confused those, who, being of no party, yet had adopted the popular notions. Even Hume is at variance with himself; for he censures James for his indolence, "which prevented him making any progress in the practice of foreign politics, and diminished that regard which all the neighbouring nations had paid to England during the reign of his predecessor," p. 29. Yet this philosopher observes afterwards, on the military character of Prince Henry, at p. 63, that "had he lived, he had probably promoted *the glory, perhaps not the felicity, of his people.* The unhappy prepossession of men in favour of ambition, &c., engages them into such pursuits *as destroy their own peace, and that of the rest of mankind.*" This is true philosophy, however politicians may comment, and however the military may command the state. Had Hume, with all the sweetness of his temper, been a philosopher on the throne, himself had probably incurred the censure he passed on James I. Another important contradiction in Hume deserves detection. The king, it seems, "boasted of his management of Ireland as his masterpiece." According to the accounts of Sir John Davies, whose political works are still read, and whom Hume quotes, James I. "in the space of nine years made greater advances towards the reformation of that kingdom than had been effected in more than four centuries;" on this Hume adds that the king's

are found in the correspondence of the French ambassadors. They studied to flavour their dish, made of spy and gossip, to the taste of their master. Henry IV. never forgave James for his adherence to Spain and peace, instead of France and warlike designs.

* Hacket's Scrinia Reserata, Part I. p. 27.

† As evidences of this zeal for reform, I throw into this note some extracts from the MS. letters of contemporaries.—Of the king's interference between the judges of two courts about prohibitions, Sir Dudley Carleton gives this account:—"The king played the best part in collecting arguments on both sides, and concluded that he saw much endeavour to draw water to their several mills; and advised them to take moderate courses, whereby the good of the subject might be more respected than their particular jurisdictions. The king sat also at the Admiralty, to look himself into certain disorders of government there: he told the lawyers, 'he would leave hunting of hares, and hunt them in their quirks and subtilities, with which the subject had been too long abused.'"—MS. Letter of Sir Dudley Carleton.

In Winwood's Memorials of State there is a letter from Lord Northampton, who was present at one of these strict examinations of the king; and his language is warm with admiration: the letter, being a private one, can hardly be suspected of court flattery. "His majesty hath in person, with the greatest dexterity of wit and strength of argument that mine ears ever heard, compounded between the parties of the civil and ecclesiastical courts; who begin to comply, by the king's sweet temper, on points that were held to be incompatible."—Winwood's Mem. iii. p. 54.

In his progresses through the country, if any complained of having received injury from any of the court, the king punished, or had satisfaction made to the wronged, immediately.

"*vanity* in this particular was not without foundation." Thus in describing that wisest act of a sovereign, the art of humanising his ruder subjects by colonisation, so unfortunate is James, that even his most skilful apologist, influenced by popular prepossessions, employs a degrading epithet—and yet he, who had indulged a sarcasm on the *vanity* of James, in closing his general view of his wise administration in Ireland, is carried away by his nobler feelings.—"Such were the arts," exclaims the historian, "by which James introduced humanity and justice among a people who had ever been buried in the most profound barbarism. Noble cares! much superior to the vain and criminal glory of conquests." Let us add, that had the genius of James the First been warlike, had he commanded a battle to be fought and a victory to be celebrated, popular historians, the panders of ambition, had adorned their pages with bloody trophies; but the peace the monarch cultivated; the wisdom which dictated the plan of civilisation; and the persevering arts which put it into practice—these are the still virtues which give no motion to the *spectacle* of the historian, and are even forgotten in his pages.

What were the painful feelings of Catharine Macaulay, in summing up the character of James the First. The king has even extorted from her a confession, that "his conduct in Scotland was unexceptionable," but "despicable in his Britannic government." To account for this seeming change in a man who, from his first to his last day, was always the same, required a more sober historian. She tells us also, he affected "a sententious wit;" but she adds, that it consisted "only of quaint and stale conceits." We need not take the word of Mrs. Macaulay, since we have so much of this "sententious wit" recorded, of which probably she knew little. Forced to confess that James's education had been "a more learned one than is usually bestowed on princes," we find how useless it is to educate princes at all; for this "more learned education" made this prince "more than commonly deficient in all the points he pretended to have any knowledge of." This incredible result gives no encouragement for a prince, having a Buchanan for his tutor. Smollett, having compiled the popular accusations of the "vanity, the prejudices, the littleness of soul," of this abused monarch, surprises one in the same page by discovering enough good qualities to make something more than a tolerable king. "His reign, though ignoble to himself, was happy to his people, who were enriched by commerce, felt no severe impositions, while they made considerable progress in their liberties." So that, on the whole, the nation appears not to have had all the reason they have so fully exercised in deriding and vilifying a sovereign, who had made them prosperous at the price of making himself contemptible! I shall notice another writer, of an amiable character, as an evidence of the influence of popular prejudice, and the effect of truth.

When James went to Denmark to fetch his queen, he passed part of his time among the learned; but, such was his habitual attention in studying the duties of the sovereign, that he closely attended the Danish courts of justice; and Daines Barrington, in his curious "Observations on the Statutes," mentions, that the king borrowed from the Danish code three statutes for the punishment of criminals. But so provocative of sarcasm is the ill-used name of this monarch, that our author could not but shrewdly observe, that James "spent more time in those courts than in attending upon his destined consort." Yet this is not true: the king was jovial there, and was as indulgent a husband as he was a father. Osborne even censures James for once giving marks of his uxoriousness *! But while Daines Barrington degrades, by unmerited ridicule, the honourable employment of the "British Solomon," he becomes himself perplexed at the truth that flashes on his eyes. He expresses the most perfect admiration of James the First, whose statutes he declares "deserve much to be enforced; nor do I find any one which hath the least tendency to extend the prerogative, or abridge the liberties and rights of his subjects." He who came to scoff remained to pray. Thus a lawyer, in examining the laws of James the First, concludes by approaching nearer to the truth: the step was a bold one! He says, "*It is at present a sort of fashion* to suppose that this king, because he was a pedant, had no real understanding, or merit." Had Daines Barrington been asked for proofs of the pedantry of James the First, he had been still more perplexed; but what can be more convincing than a lawyer, on a review of the character of James the First, being struck, as he tells us, by "his desire of being instructed in the English law, and holding frequent conferences for this purpose with the most eminent lawyers,—as Sir Edward Coke, and others!" Such was the monarch whose character was perpetually reproached for indolent habits, and for exercising arbitrary power! Even Mr. Brodie, the vehement adversary of the Stuarts, quotes and admires James's prescient decision on the character of Laud in that remarkable conversation with Buckingham and Prince Charles recorded by Hacket †.

* See "Curiosities of Literature," 11th Edit. p. 493.

† Brodie's History of British Empire, vol. ii. p. 244, 411.

But let us leave these moderns perpetuating traditional prejudices, and often to the fiftieth echo, still sounding with no voice of its own, to learn what the unprejudiced contemporaries of James I. thought of the cause of the disorders of their age. They were alike struck by the wisdom and the zeal of the monarch, and the prevalent discontents of this long reign of peace. At first, says the continuator of Stowe, all ranks but those "who were settled in piracy," as he designates the cormorants of war, and curiously enumerates their classes, "were right joyful of the peace; but, in a few years afterwards, all the benefits were generally forgotten, and the happiness of the general peace of the most part contemned." The honest annalist accounts for this unexpected result by the natural reflection—"Such is the world's corruption, and man's vile ingratitude *." My philosophy enables me to advance but little beyond. A learned contemporary, Sir Symond D'Ewes, in his manuscript diary, notices the death of the monarch, whom he calls "our learned and peaceable sovereign."—"It did not a little amaze me to see all men generally slight and disregard the loss of so mild and gentle a prince, which made me even to feel, that the ensuing times might yet render his loss more sensible, and his memory more dear unto posterity." Sir Symond censures the king for not engaging in the German war to support the Palsgrave, and maintain "the true church of God;" but deeper politicians have applauded the king for avoiding a war, in which he could not essentially have served the interests of the rash prince who had assumed the title of King of Bohemia †. "Yet," adds Sir Symond, "if we consider his virtues and his learning, his augmenting the liberties of the English, rather than his oppressing them by any unlimited or illegal taxes and corrosions, his death deserved more sorrow and condolement from his subjects than it found ‡."

Another contemporary author, Wilson, has not ill traced the generations of this continued peace: "peace begot plenty, plenty begot ease and wantonness, and ease and wantonness begot poetry, and poetry swelled out into that bulk in this king's time which begot monstrous satyrs." Such were the lascivious times, which, dissolving the ranks of society in a general corruption, created on one part the imaginary and unlimited wants of prosperity; and, on the other produced the riotous children of indolence, and the turbulent adventurers of want. The rank luxuriance of this reign was a steaming hot-bed of peace, which proved to be the seed-plot of that revolution which was reserved for the unfortunate son.

In the subsequent reign a poet seems to have taken a retrospective view of the age of peace of James I. contemplating on its results in his own disastrous times—

——————States that never know
A change but in their growth, which a long peace
Hath brought unto perfection, are like steel,
Which being neglected will consume itself
With its own rust; so doth Security
Eat through the hearts of states, while they are sleeping
And lulled into false quiet.

NABB'S *Hannibal and Scipio.*

* Stowe's Annals, p. 845.

† See Sir Edward Walker's Hist. Discourses, p. 321: and Barrington's Observ. on the Statutes, who says, "For this he deserves the highest praise and commendation from a nation of islanders."

‡ Harl. MSS. 646.

SUMMARY OF HIS CHARACTER.

THUS the continued peace of James I. had calamities of its own! Are we to attribute them to the king? It has been usual with us, in the solemn expiations of our history, to convert the sovereign into the scape-goat for the people; the historian, like the priest of the Hebrews, laying his hands on Azazel §, the curses of the multitude are heaped on that devoted head. And thus the historian conveniently solves all ambiguous events.

The character of James I. is a moral phenomenon, a singularity of a complex nature. We see that we cannot trust to those modern writers who have passed their censures upon him, however just may be those very censures, for when we look narrowly into their representations, as surely we find, perhaps without an exception, that an invective never closes without some unexpected mitigating circumstance, or qualifying abatement. At the moment of inflicting the censure, some recollection in opposition to what is asserted passes in the mind, and to approximate to Truth, they offer a discrepancy, a self-contradiction. James must always be condemned on a system, while his apology is only allowed the benefit of a parenthesis.

How it has happened that our luckless crowned philosopher has been the common mark at which so many quivers have been emptied, should be quite obvious when so many causes were operating against him. The shifting positions into which he was cast, and the ambiguity of his character, will

§ The Hebrew name, which Calmet translates *Bouc Emissaire;* and we *'Scape Goat*, or rather *Escape Goat.*

unriddle the enigma of his life. Contrarieties cease to be contradictions when operated on by external causes.

James was two persons in one, frequently opposed to each other. He was an antithesis in human nature—or even a solecism. We possess ample evidence of his shrewdness and of his simplicity; we find the lofty regal style mingled with his familiar bonhommie. Warm, hasty, and volatile, yet with the most patient zeal to disentangle involved deception; such gravity in sense, such levity in humour; such wariness and such indiscretion; such mystery and such openness—all these must have often thrown his Majesty into some awkward dilemmas. He was a man of abstract speculation in the theory of human affairs; too witty or too aphoristic, he never seemed at a loss to decide, but too careless, perhaps too infirm, ever to come to a decision, he leaned on others. He shrunk from the council-table; he had that distaste for the routine of business which studious sedentary men are too apt to indulge; and imagined that his health, which he said was the health of the kingdom, depended on the alternate days which he devoted to the chase; Royston and Theobalds were more delectable than a deputation from the Commons, or the Court at Whitehall.

It has not always been arbitrary power which has forced the people into the dread circle of their fate, seditions, rebellions, and civil wars; nor always oppressive taxation, which has given rise to public grievances. Such were not the crimes of James the First. Amid the full blessings of peace, we find how the people are prone to corrupt themselves, and how a philosopher on the throne, the father of his people, may live without exciting gratitude, and die without inspiring regret—unregarded, unremembered!

END OF THE CHARACTER OF JAMES THE FIRST.

THE

LITERARY CHARACTER;

OR THE

HISTORY OF MEN OF GENIUS,

DRAWN FROM THEIR OWN FEELINGS AND CONFESSIONS.

TO

ROBERT SOUTHEY, LL.D.

&c. &c. &c.

In dedicating this Work to one of the most eminent literary characters of the age, I am experiencing a peculiar gratification, in which few, perhaps none, of my contemporaries can participate; for I am addressing him, whose earliest effusions attracted my regard, near half a century past; and during that awful interval of time, for fifty years is a trial of life of whatever may be good in us, you have multiplied your talents, and have never lost a virtue.

When I turn from the uninterrupted studies of your domestic solitude to our metropolitan authors, the contrast, if not encouraging, is at least extraordinary. You are not unaware that the revolutions of Society have operated on our literature, and that new classes of readers have called forth new classes of writers. The causes, and the consequences, of the present state of this fugitive literature, might form an inquiry which would include some of the important topics which concern the PUBLIC MIND,—but an inquiry which might be invidious shall not disturb a page consecrated to the record of excellence. They who draw their inspiration from the hour must not, however, complain if with that hour they pass away.

I. D'ISRAELI.

March, 1839.

PREFACE.

For the fifth time I revise a subject which has occupied my inquiries from early life, with feelings still delightful, and an enthusiasm not wholly diminished.

Had not the principle upon which this work is constructed occurred to me in my youth, the materials which illustrate the literary character could never have been brought together. It was in early life that I conceived the idea of pursuing the history of genius by the similar events which had occurred to men of genius. Searching into literary history for the literary character formed a course of experimental philosophy in which every new essay verified a former trial, and confirmed a former truth. By the great philosophical principle of induction, inferences were deduced and results established, which, however vague and doubtful in speculation, are irresistible when the appeal is made to facts as they relate to others, and to feelings which must be decided on as they are passing in our own breast.

It is not to be inferred from what I have here stated, that I conceive that any single man of genius will resemble every man of genius; for not only man differs from man, but varies from himself in the different stages of human life. All that I assert is, that every man of genius will discover, sooner or later, that he belongs to the brotherhood of his class, and that he cannot escape from certain habits, and feelings, and disorders, which arise from the same temperament and sympathies, and are the necessary consequence of occupying the same position, and passing through the same moral existence. Whenever we compare men of genius with each other, the history of those who are no more will serve as a perpetual commentary on our contemporaries. There are, indeed, secret feelings which their prudence conceals, or their fears obscure, or their modesty shrinks from, or their pride rejects; but I have sometimes imagined that I have held the clue as they have lost themselves in their own labyrinth. I know that many, and some of great celebrity, have sympathised with the feelings which inspired these volumes; nor, while I have elucidated the idiosyncrasy of genius, have I less studied the habits and characteristics of the lovers of literature.

It has been considered that the subject of this work might have been treated with more depth of metaphysical disquisition; and there has since appeared an attempt to combine with this investigation the medical science. A work, however, should be judged by its design and its execution, and not by any preconceived notion of what it ought to be according to the critic, rather than the author. The nature of this work is dramatic rather than metaphysical. It offers a narration or a description; a conversation or a monologue; an incident or a scene.

Perhaps I have sometimes too warmly apologised for the infirmities of men of genius. From others we may hourly learn to treat with levity the man of genius because he is *only* such. Perhaps also I may have been too fond of the subject, which has been for me an old and a favourite one—I may have exalted the literary character, beyond the scale by which society is willing to fix it. Yet what is this Society, so omnipotent so all-judicial? The society of to-day was not the society of yesterday. Its feelings, its thoughts, its manners, its rights, its wishes, and its wants, are different and are changed: alike changed or alike created by those very literary characters whom it rarely comprehends and often would despise. Let us no longer look upon this retired and peculiar class as useless members of our busy race. There are mental as well as material labourers. The first are not less necessary; and as they are much rarer, so are they more precious. These are they whose "published labours" have benefited mankind—these are they whose thoughts can alone rear that beautiful fabric of social life, which it is the object of all good men to elevate or to support. To discover truth and to maintain it, —to develop the powers, to regulate the passions, to ascertain the privileges of man,—such have ever been, and such ever ought to be, the labours of AUTHORS! Whatever we enjoy of political and private happiness, our most necessary knowledge as well as our most refined pleasures, are alike owing to this class of men; and of these, some for glory, and often from benevolence, have shut themselves out from the very beings whom they love, and for whom they labour.

Upwards of forty years have elapsed since, composed in a distant county, and printed at a provincial press, I published "An Essay on the Manners and Genius of the Literary Character." To my own habitual and inherent defects were superadded those of my youth. The crude production was however not ill received, for the edition disappeared, and the subject was found more interesting than the writer.

During a long interval of twenty years, this little work was often recalled to my recollection by several, and by some who have since obtained celebrity. They imagined that their attachment to literary pursuits had been strengthened even by so weak an effort. An extraordinary circumstance concurred with these opinions. A copy accidentally fell into my hands which had formerly belonged to the great poetical genius of our times; and the singular fact, that it had been more than once read by him, and twice in two subsequent years at Athens, in 1810 and 1811, instantly convinced me that the volume deserved my renewed attention.

It was with these feelings that I was again strongly attracted to a subject from which, indeed, during the course of a studious life, it had never been long diverted. The consequence of my labours was the publication, in 1818, of an octavo volume, under the title of "The Literary Character, illustrated by the History of Men of Genius, drawn from their own feelings and confessions."

In the Preface to this Edition, in mentioning the fact respecting Lord Byron, which had been the immediate cause of its publication, I added these words: "I tell this fact assuredly not from any little vanity which it may appear to betray;—for the truth is, were I not as liberal and as candid in respect to my own productions, as I hope I am to others, I could not have been gratified by the present circumstance; for the marginal notes of the noble author convey no flattery;—but amidst their pungency, and sometimes their truth, the circumstance that a man of genius could reperuse this slight effusion at two different periods of his life, was a sufficient authority, at least for an author, to return it once more to the anvil."

Some time after the publication of this Edition of "The Literary Character," which was in fact a new work, I was shown, through the kindness of an English gentleman lately returned from Italy, a

copy of it, which had been given to him by Lord Byron, and which again contained marginal notes by the noble author. These were peculiarly interesting, and were chiefly occasioned by observations on his character, which appeared in the work.

In 1822 I published a new edition of this work, greatly enlarged, and in two volumes. I took this opportunity of inserting the Manuscript Notes of Lord Byron, with the exception of one, which, however characteristic of the amiable feelings of the noble poet, and however gratifying to my own, I had no wish to obtrude on the notice of the public*.

Soon after the publication of this third Edition, I received the following letter from his Lordship:—

"*Montenero, Villa Dupuy, near Leghorn, June* 10, 1822.

"Dear Sir,—

"If you will permit me to call you so,—I had some time ago taken up my pen at Pisa, to thank you for the present of your new edition of the 'Literary Character,' which has often been to me a consolation, and always a pleasure. I was interrupted, however, partly by business, and partly by vexation of different kinds,—for I have not very long ago lost a child by a fever, and I have had a good deal of petty trouble with the laws of this lawless country, on account of the prosecution of a servant for an attack upon a cowardly scoundrel of a dragoon, who drew his sword upon some unarmed Englishmen, and whom I had done the honour to mistake for an officer, and to treat like a gentleman. He turned out to be neither,—like many other with medals, and in uniform; but he paid for his brutality with a severe and dangerous wound, inflicted by nobody knows whom, for, of three suspected, and two arrested, they have been able to identify neither; which is strange, since he was wounded in the presence of thousands, in a public street, during a feast-day and full promenade.—But to return to things more analogous to the 'Literary Character:' I wish to say, that had I known that the book was to fall into your hands, or that the MS. notes you have thought worthy of publication would have attracted your attention, I would have made them more copious, and perhaps not so careless.

"I really cannot know whether I am, or am not, the genius you are pleased to call me,—but I am very willing to put up with the mistake, if it be one. It is a title dearly enough bought by most men, to render it endurable, even when not quite clearly made out, which it never *can* be, till the Posterity, whose decisions are merely dreams to ourselves, have sanctioned or denied it, while it can touch us no further.

"Mr. Murray is in possession of a MS. memoir of mine (not to be published till I am in my grave), which, strange as it may seem, I never read over since it was written, and have no desire to read over again. In it I have told what, as far as I know, is the *truth—not* the *whole* truth—for if I had done so, I must have involved much private, and some dissipated history: but, nevertheless, nothing but truth, as far as regard for others permitted it to appear.

"I do not know whether you have seen those MSS.; but, as you are curious in such things as relate to the human mind, I should feel gratified if you had. I also sent him (Murray), a few days

* As everything connected with the reading of a mind like Lord Byron's is interesting to the philosophical inquirer, this note may now be preserved. On that passage of the Preface of the second Edition which I have already quoted, his Lordship was thus pleased to write:

"I was wrong, but I was young and petulant, and probably wrote down anything, little thinking that those observations would be betrayed to the author, whose abilities I have always respected, and whose works in general I have read oftener than perhaps those of any English author whatever, except such as treat of Turkey."

since, a Common-place Book, by my friend Lord Clare, containing a few things, which may perhaps aid his publication in case of his surviving me. If there are any questions which you would like to ask me, as connected with your philosophy of the literary mind (*if* mine be a literary mind), I will answer them fairly, or give a reason for *not*, good—bad—or indifferent. At present, I am paying the penalty of having helped to spoil the public taste; for, as long as I wrote in the false exaggerated style of youth and the times in which we live, they applauded me to the very echo; and within these few years, when I have endeavoured at better things, and written what I suspect to have the principle of duration in it: the Church, the Chancellor, and all men, even to my grand patron, Francis Jeffrey, Esq., of the Edinburgh Review, have risen up against me, and my later publications. Such is Truth! men dare not look her in the face, except by degrees; they mistake her for a Gorgon, instead of knowing her to be Minerva. I do not mean to apply this mythological simile to my own endeavours, but I have only to turn over a few pages of your volumes, to find innumerable and far more illustrious instances. It is lucky that I am of a temper not to be easily turned aside, though by no means difficult to irritate. But I am making a dissertation, instead of writing a letter. I write to you from the Villa Dupuy, near Leghorn, with the islands of Elba and Corsica visible from my balcony, and my old friend the Mediterranean rolling blue at my feet. As long as I retain my feeling and my passion for Nature, I can partly soften or subdue my other passions, and resist or endure those of others.

"I have the honour to be, truly, your obliged and faithful servant,

"NOEL BYRON.

"*To I. D'Israeli, Esq.*"

The ill-starred expedition to Greece followed this Letter.

This work, conceived in youth, executed by the research of manhood, and associated with the noblest feelings of our nature, is an humble but fervent tribute, offered to the memory of those Master Spirits from whose labours, as BURKE eloquently describes, "their country receives permanent service: those who know how to make the silence of their closets more beneficial to the world, than all the noise and bustle of courts, senates, and camps."

ON THE

LITERARY CHARACTER.

CHAPTER I.

Of Literary Characters, and of the Lovers of Literature and Art.

DIFFUSED over enlightened Europe, an order of men has arisen, who, uninfluenced by the interests or the passions which give an impulse to the other classes of society, are connected by the secret links of congenial pursuits, and, insensibly to themselves, are combining in the same common labours, and participating in the same divided glory. In the metropolitan cities of Europe the same authors are now read, and the same opinions become established: the Englishman is familiar with Machiavel and Montesquieu; the Italian and the Frenchman with Bacon and Locke; and the same smiles and tears are awakened on the banks of the Thames, of the Seine, or of the Guadalquivir, by Shakespeare, Molière, and Cervantes:

> Contemporains de tous les hommes,
> Et citoyens de tous les lieux.

A khan of Tartary admired the wit of Molière, and discovered the Tartuffe in the Crimea; and had this ingenious sovereign survived the translation which he ordered, the immortal labour of the comic satirist of France might have laid the foundation of good taste even among the Turks and the Tartars. We see the Italian Pignotti referring to the opinion of an English critic, Lord Bolingbroke, for decisive authority on the peculiar characteristics of the historian Guicciardini: the German Schlegel writes on our Shakespeare like a patriot; and while the Italians admire the noble scenes which our Flaxman has drawn from their great poet, they have rejected the feeble attempts of their native artists. Such is the wide and the perpetual influence of this living intercourse of literary minds.

Scarcely have two centuries elapsed since the literature of every nation was limited to its father-land, and men of genius long could only hope for the spread of their fame in the single language of ancient Rome; which for them had ceased to be natural, and could never be popular. It was in the intercourse of the wealth, the power, and the novel arts of the nations of Europe, that they learned each other's languages; and they discovered that, however their manners varied as they arose from their different customs, they participated in the same intellectual faculties, suffered from the same wants, and were alive to the same pleasures; they perceived that there were no conventional fashions, nor national distinctions, in abstract truths and fundamental knowledge. A new spirit seems to bring them nearer to each other: and, as if literary Europe were intent to form but one people out of the populace of mankind, they offer their reciprocal labours; they pledge to each other the same opinions; and that knowledge which, like a small river, takes its source from one spot, at length mingles with the ocean-stream common to them all.

But those who stand connected with this literary community are not always sensible of the kindred alliance; even a genius of the first order has not always been aware that he is the founder of a society, and that there will ever be a brotherhood where there is a father-genius.

These literary characters are partially, and with a melancholy colouring, exhibited by JOHNSON. "To talk in private, to think in solitude, to inquire

or to answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terror; and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself." Thus thought this great writer during those sad probationary years of genius, when

"Slow rises worth, by *poverty* depress'd;"

not yet conscious that he himself was devoting his days to cast the minds of his contemporaries and of the succeeding age in the mighty mould of his own; for JOHNSON was of that order of men whose individual genius becomes that of a people. A prouder conception rose in the majestic mind of MILTON, of "that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose PUBLISHED LABOURS advanced the good of mankind."

The LITERARY CHARACTER is a denomination which, however vague, defines the pursuits of the individual, and separates him from other professions, although it frequently occurs that he is himself a member of one. Professional characters are modified by the change of manners, and are usually national; while the literary character, from the objects in which it concerns itself, retains a more permanent, and necessarily a more independent nature.

Formed by the same habits, and influenced by the same motives, notwithstanding the contrast of talents and tempers, and the remoteness of times and places, the literary character has ever preserved among its followers the most striking family resemblance. The passion for study, the delight in books, the desire of solitude and celebrity, the obstructions of human life, the character of their pursuits, the uniformity of their habits, the triumphs and the disappointments of literary glory, were as truly described by CICERO and the younger PLINY as by PETRARCH and ERASMUS, and as they have been by HUME and GIBBON. And this similarity too may equally be remarked with respect to that noble passion of the lovers of literature and of art for collecting together their mingled treasures; a thirst which was as insatiable in ATTICUS and PEIRESC as in our CRACHERODE and TOWNLEY. We trace the feelings of our literary contemporaries in all ages, and among every people who have ranked with nations far advanced in civilisation; for among these may be equally observed both the great artificers of knowledge, and those who preserve unbroken the vast chain of human acquisitions. The one have stamped the images of their minds on their works, and the others have preserved the circulation of this intellectual coinage, this

——— Gold of the dead,
Which Time does still disperse, but not devour.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Adversaries of Literary Men among themselves.—Matter-of-fact Men, and Men of Wit.—The Political Economist.—Of those who abandon their studies.—Men in office.—The arbiters of public opinion.—Those who treat the pursuits of literature with levity.

THE pursuits of literature have been openly or insidiously lowered by those literary men who, from motives not always difficult to penetrate, are eager to confound the ranks in the republic of letters, maliciously conferring the honours of authorship on that "Ten Thousand" whose recent list is not so much a muster-roll of heroes, as a table of population*.

Matter-of-fact men, or men of knowledge, and men of wit and taste, were long inimical to each other's pursuits †. The Royal Society in its origin could hardly support itself against the ludicrous attacks of literary men ‡, and the Antiquarian Society has afforded them amusement. Such partial views have ceased to contract the under-

* We have a Dictionary of "Ten Thousand living Authors" of our own nation. The alphabet is fatal by its juxta-positions. In France, before the Revolution, they counted about twenty thousand writers. When David would have his people numbered, Joab asked, "Why doth my lord delight in this?" In political economy, the population returns may be useful, provided they be correct; but in the literary republic, its numerical force diminishes the strength of the empire. "There you are numbered, we had rather you were weighed." Put aside the puling infants of literature, of whom such a mortality occurs in its nurseries; such as the writers of the single sermon, the single law-tract, the single medical dissertation, &c.; all writers whose subject is single, without being singular; count for nothing the inefficient mob of mediocrists; and strike out our literary *charlatans;* and then our alphabet of men of genius will not consist, as it now does, of the four-and-twenty letters.

† The cause is developed in the chapter on *Want of mutual Esteem.*

‡ See BUTLER, in his "Elephant in the Moon." SOUTH, in his oration at the opening of the theatre at Oxford, passed this bitter sarcasm on the naturalists,—"*Mirantur nihil nisi pulices, pediculos—et se ipsos;*"—nothing they admire but fleas, lice, and themselves! The illustrious SLOANE endured a long persecution from the bantering humour of DR. KING. One of the most amusing declaimers against what he calls *les Sciences des faux Sçavans* is Father MALEBRANCHE; he is far more severe than Cornelius Agrippa, and he long preceded ROUSSEAU, so famous for his invective against the sciences. The seventh chapter of his fourth book is an inimitable satire. "The principal excuse," says he, "which engages men in *false studies*, is, that they have attached the *idea of learned* where they should not." Astronomy, antiquarianism, history, ancient poetry, and natural history, are all mowed down by his metaphysical scythe. When we become acquainted with the *idea* Father Malebranche attaches to the term *learned*, we understand him—and we smile.

standing. Science yields a new substance to literature; Literature combines new associations for the votaries of knowledge. There is no subject in nature, and in the history of man, which will not associate with our feelings and our curiosity, whenever genius extends its awakening hand. The antiquary, the naturalist, the architect, the chemist, and even writers on medical topics, have in our days asserted their claims, and discovered their long-interrupted relationship with the great family of genius and literature.

A new race of jargonists, the barbarous metaphysicians of political economy, have struck at the essential existence of the productions of genius in literature and art; for, appreciating them by their own standard, they have miserably degraded the professors. Absorbed in the contemplation of material objects, and rejecting whatever does not enter into their own restricted notion of "utility," these cold arithmetical seers, with nothing but millions in their imagination, and whose choicest works of art are spinning-jennies, have valued the intellectual tasks of the library and the studio by "the demand and the supply." They have sunk these pursuits into the class of what they term "unproductive labour;" and by another result of their line and level system, men of letters, with some other important characters, are forced down into the class "of buffoons, singers, opera-dancers, &c." In a system of political economy it has been discovered, that "that *unprosperous race* of men, called *men of letters*, must *necessarily* occupy their present *forlorn state* in society much as formerly, when a scholar and a beggar seem to have been terms very nearly synonymous*." In their commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing view of human nature, addressing society by its most pressing wants and its coarsest feelings, these theorists limit the moral and physical existence of man by speculative tables of population, planing and levelling society down in their carpentry of human nature. They would yoke and harness the loftier spirits to one common and vulgar destination. Man is considered only as he wheels on the wharf, or as he spins in the factory; but man, as a recluse being of meditation, or impelled to action by more generous passions, has been struck out of the system of our political economists. It is, however, only among their "unproductive labourers" that we shall find those men of leisure, whose habitual pursuits are consumed in the development of thought, and the gradual accessions of knowledge; those men of whom the sage of Judea declares, that "It is he who hath little business who shall become wise: how can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and whose talk is of bullocks? But THEY,"—the men of leisure and study,—"WILL MAINTAIN THE STATE OF THE WORLD!" The prosperity and the happiness of a people include something more evident and more permanent than "the Wealth of a Nation†."

There is a more formidable class of men of genius, who are heartless to the interests of literature. Like CORNELIUS AGRIPPA, who wrote on "the vanity of the arts and sciences," many of these are only tracing in the arts which they have abandoned their own inconstant tempers, their feeble tastes, and their disordered judgments. But with others of this class, study has usually served as the instrument, not as the object, of their ascent; it was the ladder which they once climbed, but it was not the eastern star which guided and inspired. Such literary characters were WARBURTON, WATSON, and WILKES, who abandoned their studies when their studies had served a purpose.

WATSON gave up his pursuits in chemistry the instant he obtained their limited reward, and the laboratory closed when the professorship was instituted. Such was the penurious love he bore for the science which he had adopted, that the extraordinary discoveries of thirty years subsequent to his own first essays, could never excite even an idle inquiry. He tells us that he preferred "his larches to his laurels:" the wretched jingle expressed the mere worldliness that dictated it. In the same spirit of calculation with which

* Wealth of Nations, i. 182.

† Since this murmur has been uttered against the degrading views of some of those theorists, it afforded me pleasure to observe that Mr. Malthus has fully sanctioned its justness. On this head, at least, Mr. Malthus has amply confuted his stubborn and tasteless brothers. Alluding to the productions of genius, this writer observes, that, "to estimate the value of NEWTON's discoveries, or the delight communicated by SHAKESPEARE and MILTON, by the *price* at which their works have sold, would be but a poor measure of the degree in which they have elevated and enchanted their country." Principles of Pol. Econ. p. 48. And hence he acknowledges, that "*some unproductive labour is of much more use and importance* than productive labour, but is incapable of being the subject of the gross calculations which relate to national wealth; contributing to *other sources of happiness* besides those which are derived from matter." Political economists would have smiled with contempt on the querulous PORSON, who once observed, that "it seemed to him very hard, that with all his critical knowledge of Greek, he could not get a hundred pounds." They would have demonstrated to the learned Grecian, that this was just as it ought to be; the same occurrence had even happened to HOMER in his own country, where Greek ought to have fetched a higher price than in England; but, that both might have obtained this hundred pounds, had the Grecian bard and the Greek professor been employed at the same stocking-frame together, instead of the Iliad.

he had at first embraced science and literature, he abandoned them; and his ingenuous confession is a memorable example of that egotistic pride which betrayed in the literary character the creature of selfism and political ambition.

We are accustomed to consider WILKES merely as a political adventurer, and it may surprise to find this "city chamberlain" ranked among professed literary characters: yet in his variable life there was a period when he cherished the aspirations of a votary. Once he desired Lloyd to announce the edition of Churchill, which he designed to enrich by a commentary; and his correspondence on this subject, which has never appeared, would, as he himself tells us, afford a variety of hints and communications. WILKES was then warmed by literary glory; for on his retirement into Italy, he declared, "I mean to give myself entirely to our friend's work, and to my History of England. I wish to equal the dignity of Livy: I am sure the greatness and majesty of our nation demand an historian equal to him." They who have only heard of the intriguing demagogue, and witnessed the last days of the used voluptuary, may hardly imagine that WILKES had ever cherished such elevated projects; but mob-politics made this adventurer's fortune, which fell to the lot of an epicurean: and the literary glory he once sought he lived to ridicule, in the immortal diligence of Lord Chatham and of Gibbon. Dissolving life away, and consuming all his feelings on himself, WILKES left his nearest relatives what he left the world—the memory of an anti-social being! This wit, who has bequeathed to us no wit; this man of genius, who has formed no work of genius; this bold advocate for popular freedom, who sunk his patriotism in the chamberlainship; was indeed desirous of leaving behind him some trace of the life of an *escroc*, in a piece of autobiography, which, for the benefit of the world, has been thrown to the flames.

Men who have ascended into office through its gradations, or have been thrown upwards by accident, are apt to view others in a cloud of passions and politics. They who once commanded us by their eloquence, come at length to suspect the eloquent; and in their "pride of office," would now drive us by that single force of despotism which is the corruption of political power. Our late great minister, Pitt, has been reproached even by his friends for the contemptuous indifference with which he treated literary men. Perhaps BURKE himself, long a literary character, might incur some portion of this censure, by involving the character itself in the odium of a monstrous political sect. These political characters resemble Adrian VI., who obtaining the tiara as the reward of his studies, afterwards persecuted literary men, and, say the Italians, dreaded lest his brothers might shake the pontificate itself*.

Worse fares it with authors when minds of this cast become the arbiters of public opinion; for the greatest of writers may unquestionably be forced into ridiculous attitudes, by the well-known artifices practised by modern criticism. The elephant, no longer in his forest struggling with his hunters, but falling entrapped by a paltry snare, comes at length, in the height of ill-fortune, to dance on heated iron at the bidding of the pantaloon of a fair. Whatever such critics may plead to mortify the vanity of authors, at least it requires as much vanity to give effect to their own polished effrontery†. Scorn, sarcasm, and invective, the

* It has been suspected that Adrian VI. has been calumniated, for that this pontiff was only too sudden to begin the reform he meditated. But Adrian VI. was a scholastic whose austerity turned away with contempt from all ancient art, and was no brother to contemporary genius. He was one of the *cui bono* race, a branch of our political economists. When they showed him the Laocoön, Adrian silenced their raptures by the frigid observation, that all such things were *idola antiquorum*: and ridiculed the *amena letteratura* till every man of genius retreated from his court. Had Adrian's reign extended beyond its brief period, men of taste in their panic imagined that in his zeal the Pontiff would have calcined the fine statues of ancient art, to expedite the edifice of St. Peter.

† Listen to a confession and a recantation of an illustrious sinner; the Coryphæus of the amusing and newfound art, or artifice, of modern criticism. In the character of BURNS, the Edinburgh Reviewer, with his peculiar felicity of manner, attacked the character of the man of genius; but when Mr. Campbell vindicated his immortal brother with all the inspiration of the family feeling, our critic, who is one of those great artists who acquire at length the utmost indifference even for their own works, generously avowed, that, "a certain tone of exaggeration is incidental *we fear to the sort of writing in which we are engaged*. Reckoning a little too much on the dulness of our readers, we are often led to *overstate our sentiments*: when a little *controversial warmth* is added to a little *love of effect*, an excess of colouring steals over the canvas, which ultimately offends no eye so much as our own." But what if this *love of effect* in the critic has been too often obtained at the entire cost of the literary characters the fruits of whose studious days at this moment lie withering in oblivion, or whose genius the critic has deterred from pursuing the career it had opened for itself! To have silenced the learned, and to have terrified the modest, is the barbarous triumph of a Hun or a Vandal; and the vaunted freedom of the literary republic departed from us, when the vacillating public blindly consecrated the edicts of the demagogues of literature, whoever they may be.

A reaction appears in the burlesque or bantering spirit. While one faction drives out another, the abuse of extraordinary powers is equally fatal. Thus we are consoled while we are afflicted, and we are protected while we are degraded.

egotism of the vain, and the irascibility of the petulant, where they succeed in debilitating genius of the consciousness of its powers, are practising the witchery of that ancient superstition of "tying the knot," which threw the youthful bridegroom into utter despair by its ideal forcefulness *.

That spirit of levity which would shake the columns of society, by detracting from or burlesquing the elevating principles which have produced so many illustrious men, has recently attempted to reduce the labours of literature to a mere curious amusement: a finished composition is likened to a skilful game of billiards, or a piece of music finely executed; and curious researches, to charades and other insignificant puzzles. With such, an author is an idler who will not be idle, amusing or fatiguing others who are completely so. The result of a work of genius is contracted to the art of writing; but this art is only its last perfection. Inspiration is drawn from a deeper source, enthusiasm is diffused through contagious pages, and without these movements of the soul, how poor and artificial a thing is that sparkling composition, which flashes with the cold vibrations of mere art, or artifice! We have been recently told, on critical authority, that "a great genius should never allow himself to be sensible to his own celebrity, nor deem his pursuits of much consequence, however important or successful." A sort of catholic doctrine, to mortify an author into a saint, extinguishing the glorious appetite of fame by one Lent all the year, and self-flagellation every day! BUFFON and GIBBON, VOLTAIRE and POPE, who gave to literature all the cares, the industry, and the glory of their lives, assuredly were too "sensible to their celebrity, and deemed their pursuits of much consequence," particularly when "important and successful." The self-possession of great authors sustains their own genius by a sense of their own glory.

Such, then, are some of the domestic treasons of the literary character against literature—"Et tu, Brute!" But the hero of literature outlives his assassins, and might address them in that language of poetry and affection with which a Mexican king reproached his traitorous counsellors: "You were the feathers of my wings, and the eyelids of my eyes."

* *Nouer l'aiguillette*, of which the extraordinary effect is described by Montaigne, is an Oriental custom still practised.—*Mr. Hobhouse's Journey through Albania*, p. 528.

CHAPTER III.

Of artists, in the history of men of literary genius.—Their habits and pursuits analogous.—The nature of their genius is similar in their distinct works.—Shown by their parallel eras, and by a common end pursued by both.

ARTISTS and literary men, alike insulated in their studies, pass through the same permanent discipline; and thus it has happened that the same habits and feelings, and the same fortunes, have accompanied men who have sometimes unhappily imagined their pursuits not to be analogous.

Let the artist share
The palm; he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labour unapproved—alas!
Despair and genius!—

The congenial histories of literature and art describe the same periodical revolutions and parallel eras. After the golden age of Latinity, we gradually slide into the silver, and at length precipitately descend into the iron. In the history of painting, after the splendid epoch of Raphael, Titian, and Corregio, we meet with pleasure the Carraccis, Domenichino, Guido, and Albano; as we read Paterculus, Quintilian, Seneca, Juvenal, and Silius Italicus, after their immortal masters, Cicero, Livy, Virgil, and Horace.

It is evident that MILTON, MICHAEL ANGELO, and HANDEL, belong to the same order of minds; the same imaginative powers, and the same sensibility, are only operating with different materials. LANZI, the delightful historian of the *Storia Pittorica*, is prodigal of his comparisons of the painters with the poets; his delicacy of perception discerned the refined analogies which for ever unite the two sisters, and he fondly dwelt on the transplanted flowers of the two arts: "*Chi sente che sia Tibullo nel poetare sente chi sia Andrea (del Sarto) nel dipingere;*" He who feels what TIBULLUS is in poetry, feels what ANDREA is in painting. MICHAEL ANGELO, from his profound conception of the terrible and the difficult in art, was called its DANTE; from the Italian poet the Italian sculptor derived the grandeur of his ideas; and indeed the visions of the bard had deeply nourished the artist's imagination; for once he had poured about the margins of his own copy their ethereal inventions, in the rapid designs of his pen. And so Bellori informs us of a very curious volume in manuscript, composed by RUBENS, which contained, among other topics concerning art, descriptions of the passions and actions of men, drawn from the poets, and demonstrated to the eye by the painters. Here were battles, shipwrecks, sports, groups, and other incidents, which were transcribed from Virgil and other poets, and by their side RUBENS had copied what he had met with on those subjects from Raphael and the antique.

The poet and the painter are only truly great by the mutual influences of their studies, and the jealousy of glory has only produced an idle contest. This old family-quarrel for precedence was renewed by our estimable President, in his brilliant "Rhymes on Art;" where he maintains that "the narrative of an action is not comparable to the action itself before the eyes;" while the enthusiast BARRY considers painting as "poetry realised." This error of genius, perhaps first caught from Richardson's bewildering pages, was strengthened by the extravagant principle adopted by DARWIN, who, to exalt his solitary talent of descriptive poetry, asserted that "the essence of poetry was picture." The philosophical critic will find no difficulty in assigning to each sister-art her distinct province; and it is only a pleasing delirium, in the enthusiasm of artists, which has confused the boundaries of these arts. The dread pathetic story of Dante's Ugolino, under the plastic hand of Michael Angelo, formed the subject of a basso-relievo; and Reynolds, with his highest effort, embodied the terrific conception of the poet as much as his art permitted: but assuredly both these great artists would never have claimed the precedence of the Dantesc genius, and might have hesitated at the rivalry.

Who has not heard of that one common principle which unites the intellectual arts, and who has not felt that the nature of their genius is similar in their distinct works? Hence curious inquiries could never decide whether the group of the Laocoön in sculpture preceded or was borrowed from that in poetry. Lessing conjectures that the sculptor copied the poet. It is evident that the agony of Laocoön was the common end where the sculptor and the poet were to meet; and we may observe that the artists in marble and in verse skilfully adapted their variations to their respective art: the one having to prefer the *nude*, rejected the veiling fillet from the forehead, that he might not conceal its deep expression, and the drapery of the sacrificial robe, that he might display the human form in visible agony; but the other, by the charm of verse, could invest the priest with the pomp of the pontifical robe without hiding from us the interior sufferings of the human victim. We see they obtained by different means, adapted to their respective arts, that common end which each designed; but who will decide which invention preceded the other, or who was the greater artist?

This approximation of men apparently of opposite pursuits is so natural, that when GESNER, in his inspiring letter on landscape-painting, recommends to the young painter a constant study of poetry and literature, the impatient artist is made to exclaim, "Must we combine with so many other studies those which belong to literary men? Must we read as well as paint?" "It is useless to reply to this question; for some important truths must be instinctively felt, perhaps the fundamental ones in the arts." A truly imaginative artist, whose enthusiasm was never absent when he meditated on the art he loved, BARRY, thus vehemently broke forth: "Go home from the academy, light up your lamps, and exercise yourselves in the creative part of your art, with Homer, with Livy, and all the great characters ancient and modern, for your companions and counsellors." This genial intercourse of literature with art may be proved by painters who have suggested subjects to poets, and poets who have selected them for painters. GOLDSMITH suggested the subject of the tragic and pathetic picture of Ugolino to the pencil of REYNOLDS.

All the classes of men in society have their peculiar sorrows and enjoyments, as they have their peculiar habits and characteristics. In the history of men of genius we may often open the secret story of their minds, for they have above others the privilege of communicating their own feelings; and every life of a man of genius, composed by himself, presents us with the experimental philosophy of the mind. By living with their brothers, and contemplating their masters, they will judge from consciousness less erroneously than from discussion; and in forming comparative views and parallel situations, they will discover certain habits and feelings, and find these reflected in themselves.

SYDENHAM has beautifully said, whoever describes a violet exactly as to its colour, taste, smell, form, and other properties, will find the description agree in most particulars with all the violets in the universe.

CHAPTER IV.

Of natural genius.—Minds constitutionally different cannot have an equal aptitude.—Genius not the result of habit and education.—Originates in peculiar qualities of the mind.—The predisposition of genius.—A substitution for the white paper of Locke *.

THAT faculty in art which individualises the artist, belonging to him and to no other, and which

* In the second edition of this work in 1818, I touched on some points of this inquiry in the second chapter: I almost despaired to find any philosopher sympathise with the subject, so invulnerable, they imagine, are the entrenchments of their theories. I was agreeably surprised to find these ideas taken up in the Edinburgh Review for August, 1820, in an entertaining article on Reynolds. I have, no doubt, profited by the perusal, though this chapter was prepared before I met with that spirited vindication of "an inherent difference in the organs or faculties to receive impressions of any kind."

in a work forms that creative part whose likeness is not found in any other work,—is it inherent in the constitutional dispositions of the creator, or can it be formed by patient acquisition?

Astonished at their own silent and obscure progress, some have imagined that they had formed their genius solely by their own studies; when they generated, they conceived that they had acquired; and, losing the distinction between nature and habit, with fatal temerity the idolatry of philosophy substituted something visible and palpable, yet shaped by the most opposite fancies, called a Theory, for nature herself! Men of genius, whose great occupation is to be conversant with the inspirations of nature, made up a factitious one among themselves, and assumed that they could operate without the intervention of the occult original. But Nature would not be mocked; and whenever this race of idolaters have worked without her agency, she has afflicted them with the most stubborn sterility.

Theories of genius are the peculiar constructions of our own philosophical times; ages of genius had passed away, and they left no other record than their works; no preconcerted theory described the workings of the imagination to be without imagination, nor did they venture to teach how to invent invention.

The character of genius, viewed as the effect of habit and education, on the principle of the equality of the human mind, infers that men have an equal aptitude for the work of genius: a paradox which, with a more fatal one, came from the French school, and arose probably from an equivocal expression.

Locke employed the well-known comparison of the mind with "white paper void of all characters," to free his famous "Inquiry" from that powerful obstacle to his system, the absurd belief of "innate ideas," of notions of objects before objects were presented to observation. Our philosopher considered that this simple analogy sufficiently described the manner in which he conceived the impressions of the senses write themselves on the mind. His French pupils, the amusing Helvetius, or Diderot, for they were equally concerned in the paradoxical "L'Esprit," inferred that this blank paper served also as an evidence that men had *an equal aptitude for genius*, just as the blank paper reflects to us whatever characters we trace on it. This *equality of minds* gave rise to the same monstrous doctrine in the science of metaphysics which that of another verbal misconception, *the equality of men*, did in that of politics. The Scottish metaphysicians powerfully combined to illustrate the mechanism of the mind,—an important and a curious truth; for as rules and principles exist in the nature of things, and when discovered are only thence drawn out, genius unconsciously conducts itself by a uniform process; and when this process had been traced, they inferred that what was done by some men, under the influence of fundamental laws which regulate the march of the intellect, must also be in the reach of others, who, in the same circumstances, apply themselves to the same study. But these metaphysicians resemble anatomists, under whose knife all men are alike. They know the structure of the bones, the movement of the muscles, and where the connecting ligaments lie! but the invisible principle of life flies from their touch. It is the practitioner on the living body who studies in every individual that peculiarity of constitution which forms the idiosyncrasy.

Under the influence of such novel theories of genius, JOHNSON defined it as "A Mind of large general powers ACCIDENTALLY determined by some *particular direction*." On this principle we must infer that the reasoning LOCKE, or the arithmetical DE MOIVRE, could have been the musical and fairy SPENSER*. This conception of the nature of genius became prevalent. It induced the philosophical BECCARIA to assert that every individual had an equal degree of genius for poetry and eloquence; it runs through the philosophy of the elegant Dugald Stewart; and REYNOLDS, the pupil of Johnson in literature, adopting the paradox, constructed his automatic system on this principle of *equal aptitude*. He says, "this excellence, however expressed by genius, taste, or the gift of Heaven, I am confident may be *acquired*." Reynolds had the modesty to fancy that so many rivals, unendowed by nature, might have equalled the magic of his own pencil: but his theory of industry, so essential to genius, yet so useless without it, too long stimulated the drudges of art, and left us without a Corregio or a Raphael! Another man of genius caught the fever of the new system. CURRIE, in his eloquent Life of Burns, swells out the scene of genius to a startling magnificence; for he asserts, that "the talents necessary to the construction of an 'Iliad, under different discipline and application, might have led armies to victory or kingdoms to prosperity; might have wielded the thunder of eloquence, or

* It is more dangerous to define than to describe; a dry definition excludes so much, an ardent description at once appeals to our sympathies. How much more comprehensible our great critic becomes, when he nobly describes genius, "as the power of mind that collects, combines, amplifies, and animates; the energy without which judgment is cold, and knowledge is inert!" And it is this POWER OF MIND, this primary faculty and native aptitude, which we deem may exist separately from education and habit, since these are often found unaccompanied by genius.

discovered and enlarged the sciences." All this we find in the *text;* but in the clear intellect of this man of genius a vast number of intervening difficulties started up, and in a copious *note* the numerous exceptions show that the assumed theory requires no other refutation than what the theorist has himself so abundantly and so judiciously supplied. There is something ludicrous in the result of a theory of genius which would place HOBBES and ERASMUS, those timid and learned recluses, to open a campaign with the military invention and physical intrepidity of a Marlborough; or conclude that the romantic bard of the "Fairy Queen," amidst the quickly-shifting scenes of his visionary reveries, could have deduced, by slow and patient watchings of the mind, the system and the demonstrations of Newton.

Such theorists deduce the faculty called genius from a variety of exterior or secondary causes: zealously rejecting the notion that genius may originate in constitutional dispositions, and be only a mode of the individual's existence, they deny that minds are differently constituted. Habit and education, being more palpable and visible in their operations, and progressive in the development of the intellectual faculties, have been imagined fully sufficient to make the creative faculty a subject of acquirement.

But when these theorists had discovered the curious fact, that we have owed to *accident* several men of genius, and when they laid open some sources which influenced genius in its progress, they did not go one step further, they did not inquire whether such sources and such accidents had ever supplied the *want of genius* in the individual. Effects were here again mistaken for causes. Could Spenser have kindled a poet in Cowley, Richardson a painter in Reynolds, and Descartes a metaphysician in Malebranche, if those master-minds, pointed out as having been such from *accident*, had not first received the indelible mint-stamp struck by the hand of Nature, and which, to give it a name, we may be allowed to call the *predisposition* of genius? The *accidents* so triumphantly held forth, which are imagined to have created the genius of these men, have occurred to a thousand who have run the same career; but how does it happen that the multitude remain a multitude, and the man of genius arrives alone at the goal?

This theory, which long dazzled its beholders, was in time found to stand in contradiction with itself, and perpetually with their own experience. Reynolds pared down his decision in the progress of his lectures, often wavered, often altered, and grew more confused as he lived longer to look about him*. The infirm votaries of the new philosophy, with all their sources of genius open before them, went on multiplying mediocrity, while inherent genius, true to nature, still continued rare in its solitary independence.

Others have strenuously denied that we are born with any peculiar species of mind, and resolve the mysterious problem into *capacity*, of which men only differ in the degree. They can perceive no distinction between the poetical and the mathematical genius; and they conclude that a man of genius, possessing a general capacity, may become whatever he chooses, but is determined by his first acquired habit to be what he is †.

In substituting the term *capacity* for that of *genius*, the origin or nature remains equally occult. How is it acquired, or how is it inherent? To assert that any man of genius may become what he wills, those must fervently protest against who feel that the character of genius is such that it cannot be other than it is; that there is an identity of minds, and that there exists an interior conformity as marked and as perfect as the exterior physiognomy. A Scotch metaphysician has recently declared that "Locke or Newton might have been as eminent poets as Homer or Milton, had they given themselves early to the study of poetry." It is well to know how far this taste will go. We believe that had these philosophers obstinately, against nature, persisted in the attempt, as some have unluckily for themselves, we should have lost two great philosophers, and have obtained two supernumerary poets ‡.

* I transcribe the last opinions of Mr. Edgeworth. "As to original genius, and the effect of education in forming taste or directing talent, the last revisal of his opinions was given by himself, in the introduction to the second edition of Professional Education. He was strengthened in his belief, that many of the great differences of intellect which appear in men, depend more upon the early cultivating the habit of attention than upon any disparity between the powers of one individual and another. Perhaps, he latterly allowed that there is more difference than he had formerly admitted between the *natural powers* of different persons; but not so great as is generally supposed."—*Edgeworth's Memoirs*, ii. 388.

† Johnson once asserted, that "the supposition of one man having more imagination, another more judgment, is not true; it is only one man has *more mind* than another. He who has vigour may walk to the east as well as the west, if he happens to turn his head that way." Godwin was persuaded that all genius is a mere *acquisition*, for he hints at "infusing it," and making it a thing "heritable." A reversion which has been missed by the many respectable dunces who have been sons of men of genius.

‡ This very Scotch metaphysician, at the instant he lays down this postulate, acknowledges that "Dr. Beattie had talents for a *poet*, but apparently not for a *philosopher*." It is amusing to learn another result of his ungenial metaphysics. This sage demonstrates and concludes in these words, "It will therefore be found, with little exception, that *a great poet is but an ordinary*

It would be more useful to discover another source of genius for philosophers and poets, less fallible than the gratuitous assumptions of these theorists. An adequate origin for peculiar qualities in the mind may be found in that constitutional or secret propensity which adapts some for particular pursuits, and forms the *predisposition* of genius.

Not that we are bound to demonstrate what our adversaries have failed in proving; we may still remain ignorant of the nature of genius, and yet be convinced that they have not revealed it. The phenomena of *predisposition* in the mind are not more obscure and ambiguous than those which have been assigned as the sources of genius in certain individuals. For is it more difficult to conceive that a person bears in his constitutional disposition a germ of native aptitude which is developing itself to a predominant character of genius, which breaks forth in the temperament and moulds the habits, than to conjecture that these men of genius could not have been such but from *accident*, or that they differ only in their *capacity*?

Every class of men of genius has distinct habits; all poets resemble one another, as all painters and all mathematicians. There is a conformity in the cast of their minds, and the quality of each is distinct from the other, and the very faculty which fits them for one particular pursuit, is just the reverse required for another. If these are truisms, as they may appear, we need not demonstrate that from which we only wish to draw our conclusion. Why does this remarkable similarity prevail through the classes of genius? Because each, in their favourite production, is working with the same appropriate organ. The poetical eye is early busied with imagery; as early will the reveries of the poetical mind be busied with the passions; as early will the painter's hand be copying forms and colours; as early will the young musician's ear wander in the creation of sounds, and the philosopher's head mature its meditations. It is then the aptitude of the appropriate organ, however it varies in its character, in which genius seems most concerned, and which is connatural and connate with the individual, and, as it was expressed in old days, is *born* with him. There seems no other source of genius; for whenever this has been refused by nature, as it is so often, no theory of genius, neither habit nor education, have ever supplied its want. To discriminate between the *habit* and the *predisposition* is quite impossible; because whenever great genius discovers itself, as it can only do by continuity, it has become a habit with the individual; it is the fatal notion of habit having the power of generating genius, which has so long served to delude the numerous votaries of mediocrity. Natural or native power is enlarged by art; but the most perfect art has but narrow limits, deprived of natural disposition.

A curious decision on this obscure subject may be drawn from an admirable judge of the nature of genius. AKENSIDE, in that fine poem which forms its history, tracing its source, sang,

> From Heaven my strains begin, from Heaven descends
> The flame of genius to *the human breast.*

But in the final revision of that poem, which he left many years after, the bard has vindicated the solitary and independent origin of genius, by the mysterious epithet,

"THE CHOSEN BREAST."

The veteran poet was, perhaps, schooled by the vicissitudes of his own poetical life, and those of some of his brothers.

Metaphors are but imperfect illustrations in metaphysical inquiries: usually they include too little or take in too much. Yet fanciful analogies are not willingly abandoned. The iconologists describe Genius as a winged child with a flame above its head; the wings and the flame express more than some metaphysical conclusions. Let me substitute for "the white paper" of Locke, which served the philosopher in his description of the operations of the senses on the mind, a less artificial substance. In the soils of the earth we may discover that variety of primary qualities which we believe to exist in human minds. The botanist and the geologist always find the nature of the strata indicative of its productions; the meagre light herbage announces the poverty of the soil it covers, while the luxuriant growth of plants betrays the richness of the matrix in which the roots are fixed. It is scarcely reasoning by analogy to apply this operating principle of nature to the faculties of men.

But while the origin and nature of that faculty which we understand by the term Genius remain still wrapt up in its mysterious bud, may we not trace its history in its votaries? If Nature overshadow with her wings her first causes, still the effects lie open before us, and experience and observation will often deduce from consciousness what we cannot from demonstration. If Nature, in some of her great operations, has kept back her last secrets; if Newton, even in the result of his reasonings, has religiously abstained from penetrating into her occult connexions, is it nothing to be her historian, although we cannot be her legislator?

genius." Let this sturdy Scotch metaphysician never approach Pegasus—he has to fear, not his wings, but his heels. If some have written on genius with a great deal too much, others have written without any.

CHAPTER V.

Youth of genius.—Its first impulses may be illustrated by its subsequent actions.—Parents have another association of the man of genius than we.—Of genius, its first habits.—Its melancholy.—Its reveries.—Its love of solitude.—Its disposition to repose.—Of a youth distinguished by his equals.—Feebleness of its first attempts.—Of genius not discoverable even in manhood.—The education of the youth may not be that of his genius.—An unsettled impulse, querulous till it finds its true occupation.—With some, curiosity as intense a faculty as invention.—What the youth first applies to is commonly his delight afterwards.—Facts of the decisive character of genius.

We are entering into a fairy land, touching only shadows, and chasing the most changeable lights; many stories we shall hear, and many scenes will open on us; yet though realities are but dimly to be traced in this twilight of imagination and tradition, we think that the first impulses of genius may be often illustrated by the subsequent actions of the individual; and whenever we find these in perfect harmony, it will be difficult to convince us that there does not exist a secret connexion between those first impulses and these last actions.

Can we then trace in the faint lines of his youth an unsteady outline of the man? In the temperament of genius may we not reasonably look for certain indications or predispositions, announcing the permanent character? Is not great sensibility born with its irritable fibres? Will not the deep retired character cling to its musings? And the unalterable being of intrepidity and fortitude, will he not, commanding even amidst his sports, lead on his equals? The boyhood of Cato was marked by the sternness of the man, observable in his speech, his countenance, and his puerile amusements; and Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Gray, and others, betrayed the same early appearance of their intellectual vigour and precocity of character.

The virtuous and contemplative Boyle imagined that he had discovered in childhood that disposition of mind which indicated an instinctive ingenuousness. An incident which he relates, evinced, as he thought, that even then he preferred to aggravate his fault rather than consent to suppress any part of the truth, an effort which had been unnatural to his mind. His fanciful, yet striking illustration may open our inquiry. "This trivial passage," the little story alluded to, "I have mentioned now, not that I think that in itself it deserves a relation, but because as the sun is seen best at his rising and his setting, so men's native dispositions are clearliest perceived whilst they are children, and when they are dying. These little sudden actions are the greatest discoverers of men's true humours."

Alfieri, that historian of the literary mind, was conscious that even in his childhood the peculiarity and the melancholy of his character prevailed: a boyhood passed in domestic solitude, fed the interior feelings of his impassioned character; and in noticing some incidents of a childish nature, this man of genius observes, "Whoever will reflect on these inept circumstances, and explore into the seeds of the passions of man, possibly may find these neither so laughable nor so puerile as they may appear." His native genius, or by whatever other term we may describe it, betrayed the wayward predispositions of some of his poetical brothers: "Taciturn and placid for the most part, but at times loquacious and most vivacious, and usually in the most opposite extremes; stubborn and impatient against force, but most open to kindness, more restrained by the dread of reprimand than by anything else, susceptible of shame to excess, but inflexible if violently opposed." Such is the portrait of a child of seven years old, a portrait which induced the great tragic bard to deduce this result from his own self-experience, that "*man* is a continuation of the *child**."

That the dispositions of genius in early life presage its future character, was long the feeling of antiquity. Cicero, in his Dialogue on Old Age, employs a beautiful analogy drawn from nature, marking her secret conformity in all things which have life and come from her hands; and the human mind is one of her plants.—"Youth is the vernal season of life, and the blossoms it then puts forth are indications of those future fruits which are to be gathered in the succeeding periods." One of the masters of the human mind, after much previous observation of those who attended his lectures, would advise one to engage in political studies, then exhorted another to compose history, elected these to be poets, and those to be orators; for Isocrates believed that Nature had some concern in forming a man of genius, and endeavoured to guess at her secret by detecting the first energetic inclination of the mind. This also was the principle which guided the Jesuits, those other great masters in the art of education. They studied the characteristics of their pupils with such singular care, as to keep a secret register in their colleges, descriptive of their talents, and the natural turn of their dispositions. In some cases they guessed with remarkable felicity. They described Fontenelle, *adolescens omnibus numeris absolutus et inter discipulos princeps*, "a youth

* See in his Life, chap. iv., entitled *Sviluppo dell' indole indicato da vari fattarelli*. "Development of genius or natural inclination, indicated by various little matters."

accomplished in every respect, and the model for his companions;" but when they describe the elder Crébillon, *puer ingeniosus sed insignis nebulo*, "a shrewd boy, but a great rascal," they might not have erred so much as they appear to have done; for an impetuous boyhood showed the decision of a character which might not have merely and misanthropically settled in imaginary scenes of horror, and the invention of characters of unparalleled atrocity.

In the old romance of King Arthur, when a cowherd comes to the king to request he would make his son a knight—"It is a great thing thou askest," said Arthur, who inquired whether this intreaty proceeded from him or his son. The old man's answer is remarkable—"Of my son, not of me; for I have thirteen sons, and all these will fall to that labour I put them; but this child will not labour for me, for anything that I and my wife will do; but always he will be shooting and casting darts, and glad for to see battles, and to behold knights, and always day and night he desireth of me to be made a knight." The king commanded the cowherd to fetch all his sons; "they were all shapen much like the poor man; but Tor was not like none of them in shape and in countenance, for he was much more than any of them. And so Arthur knighted him." This simple tale is the history of genius—the cowherd's twelve sons were like himself, but the unhappy genius in the family, who perplexed and plagued the cowherd and his wife and his twelve brothers, was the youth averse to the common labour, and dreaming of chivalry amidst a herd of cows.

A man of genius is thus dropped among the people, and has first to encounter the difficulties of ordinary men, unassisted by that feeble ductility which adapts itself to the common destination. Parents are too often the victims of the decided propensity of a son to a Virgil or a Euclid; and the first step into life of a man of genius is disobedience and grief. LILLY, our famous astrologer, has described the frequent situation of such a youth, like the cowherd's son who would be a knight. LILLY proposed to his father that he should try his fortune in the metropolis, where he expected that his learning and his talents would prove serviceable to him; the father, quite incapable of discovering the latent genius of his son in his studious dispositions, very willingly consented to get rid of him, for, as LILLY proceeds, "I could not work, drive the plough, or endure any country labour; my father oft would say I was *good for nothing*,"—words which the fathers of so many men of genius have repeated.

In reading the memoirs of a man of genius, we often reprobate the domestic persecutions of those who opposed his inclinations. No poet but is moved with indignation at the recollection of the tutor at the Port-Royal thrice burning the romance which RACINE at length got by heart; no geometrician but bitterly inveighs against the father of PASCAL for not suffering him to study Euclid, which he at length understood without studying. The father of PETRARCH cast to the flames the poetical library of his son amidst the shrieks, the groans, and the tears of the youth. Yet this burnt-offering neither converted Petrarch into a sober lawyer, nor deprived him of the Roman laurel. The uncle of ALFIERI for more than twenty years suppressed the poetical character of this noble bard; he was a poet without knowing how to write a verse, and Nature, like a hard creditor, exacted, with redoubled interest, all the genius which the uncle had so long kept from her. These are the men whose inherent impulse no human opposition, and even no adverse education, can deter from proving them to be great men.

Let us, however, be just to the parents of a man of genius; they have another association of ideas respecting him than ourselves. We see a great man, they a disobedient child; we track him through his glory, they are wearied by the sullen resistance of one who is obscure and seems useless. The career of genius is rarely that of fortune or happiness; and the father, who himself may be not insensible to glory, dreads lest his son be found among that obscure multitude, that populace of mean artists, self-deluded yet self-dissatisfied, who must expire at the barriers of mediocrity.

If the youth of genius be struggling with a concealed impulse, he will often be thrown into a train of secret instruction which no master can impart. Hippocrates profoundly observed, that "our *natures* have not been taught us by any master." That faculty which the youth of genius displays in after-life, may exist long ere it is perceived; and it will only make its own what is homogeneous with itself. We may often observe how the mind of this youth stubbornly rejects whatever is contrary to its habits, and alien to its affections. Of a solitary character, for solitariness is the wild nurse of his contemplations, he is fancifully described by one of the race—and here fancies are facts:

> "He is retired as noon-tide dew,
> Or fountain in a noon-day grove."

The romantic SIDNEY exclaimed, "Eagles fly alone, and they are but sheep which always herd together."

As yet this being, in the first rudiments of his sensations, is touched by rapid emotions, and disturbed by a vague restlessness; for him the images of nature are yet dim, and he feels before

he thinks; for imagination precedes reflection. One truly inspired unfolds the secret story—

"Endow'd with all that Nature can bestow,
The child of fancy oft in silence bends
O'er the mixt treasures of his pregnant breast
With conscious pride. From thence he oft resolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things;
And win he knows not what sublime reward
Of praise and wonder!"

But the solitude of the youth of genius has a local influence; it is full of his own creations of his unmarked passions and his uncertain thoughts. The titles which he gives his favourite haunts, often intimate the bent of his mind—its employment, or its purpose; as PETRARCH called his retreat *Linternum*, after that of his hero Scipio; and a young poet, from some favourite description in Cowley, called a spot he loved to muse in, "Cowley's Walk."

A temperament of this kind has been often mistaken for melancholy. "When the intermission of my studies allowed me leisure for recreation," says BOYLE, of his early life, "I would very often steal away from all company, and spend four or five hours alone in the fields, and think at random; making my delighted imagination the busy scene where some romance or other was daily acted." This circumstance alarmed his friends, who concluded that he was overcome with a growing melancholy. ALFIERI found himself in this precise situation, and experienced these undefinable emotions, when, in his first travels at Marseilles, his lonely spirit only haunted the theatre and the sea-shore; the tragic drama was then casting its influences over his unconscious genius. Almost every evening, after bathing in the sea, it delighted him to retreat to a little recess where the land jutted out; there would he sit, leaning his back against a high rock, which he tells us, "concealed from my sight every part of the land behind me, while before and around me I beheld nothing but the sea and the heavens: the sun, sinking into the waves, was lighting up and embellishing these two immensities; there would I pass a delicious hour of fantastic ruminations, and there I should have composed many a poem, had I then known to write either in verse or prose in any language whatever."

An incident of this nature is revealed to us by the other noble and mighty spirit of our times, who could most truly exhibit the history of the youth of genius, and he has painted forth the enthusiasm of the boy TASSO:

"——————— From my very birth
My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers
And rocks whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering."

The youth of genius will be apt to retire from the active sports of his mates. BEATTIE paints himself in his own Minstrel:

"Concourse, and noise, and toil he ever fled,
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps; but to the forest sped."

BOSSUET would not join his young companions, and flew to his solitary task, while the classical boys avenged themselves by a schoolboy's villanous pun: stigmatising the studious application of *Bossuet* by the *bos suetus aratro* which frequent flogging had made them classical enough to quote.

The learned HUET has given an amusing detail of the inventive persecutions of his schoolmates, to divert him from his obstinate love of study. "At length, in order to indulge my own taste, I would rise with the sun, while they were buried in sleep, and hide myself in the woods, that I might read and study in quiet;" but they beat the bushes, and started in his burrow the future man of erudition. Sir WILLIAM JONES was rarely a partaker in the active sports of Harrow; it was said of GRAY that he was never a boy; the unhappy CHATTERTON and BURNS were singularly serious in youth; as were HOBBES and BACON. MILTON has preserved for us, in solemn numbers, his school-life—

"When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing: all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be public good: myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things."

It is remarkable that this love of repose and musing is retained throughout life. A man of fine genius is rarely enamoured of common amusements or of robust exercises; and he is usually unadroit where dexterity of hand or eye, or trivial elegances, are required. This characteristic of genius was discovered by HORACE in that Ode which schoolboys often versify. BEATTIE has expressly told us of his Minstrel,

"The exploit of strength, dexterity or speed
To him nor vanity nor joy could bring."

ALFIERI said he could never be taught by a French dancing-master, whose art made him at once shudder and laugh. HORACE, by his own confession, was a very awkward rider, and the poet could not always secure a seat on his mule: METASTASIO humorously complains of his gun; the poetical sportsman could only frighten the

hares and partridges; the truth was, as an elder poet sings,

> "Instead of hounds that make the wooded hills
> Talk in a hundred voices to the rills,
> I, like the pleasing cadence of a line,
> Struck by the concert of the sacred nine."

And we discover the true "humour" of the indolent contemplative race in their great representatives VIRGIL and HORACE. When they accompanied Mecænas into the country, while the minister amused himself at tennis, the two bards reposed on a vernal bank amidst the freshness of the shade. The younger Pliny, who was so perfect a literary character, was charmed by the Roman mode of hunting, or rather fowling by nets, which admitted him to sit a whole day with his tablets and stylus; so, says he, "should I return with empty nets, my tablets may at least be full." THOMSON was the hero of his own "Castle of Indolence;" and the elegant WALLER infuses into his luxurious verses the true feeling:

> "Oh, how I long my careless limbs to lay
> Under the plantane shade, and all the day
> Invoke the Muses and improve my vein."

The youth of genius, whom Beattie has drawn after himself, and I after observation, a poet of great genius, as I understand, has declared to be "too effeminate and timid, and too much troubled with delicate nerves. The *greatest poets* of all countries," he continues, "have been men eminently endowed with *bodily powers*, and rejoiced and excelled in all *manly exercises*." May not our critic of northern habits have often mistaken the art of the great poets in *describing* such "manly exercises or bodily powers," for the proof of their "rejoicing and excelling in them?" Poets and artists, from their habits, are not usually muscular and robust. Continuity of thought, absorving reverie, and sedentary habits, will not combine with corporeal skill and activity. There is also a constitutional delicacy which is too often the accompaniment of a fine intellect. The inconveniences attached to the inferior sedentary labourers are participated in by men of genius; the analogy is obvious, and their fate is common. Literary men may be included in Ramazzini's Treatise on the Diseases of Artisans. ROUSSEAU has described the labours of the closet as enervating men, and weakening the constitution, while study wears the whole machinery of man, exhausts the spirits, destroys his strength, and renders him pusillanimous*. But there is a higher principle which guides us to declare, that men of genius should not *excel* in "all manly exercises." SENECA, whose habits were completely literary, admonishes the man of letters that "Whatever amusement he chooses, he should not slowly return from those of the body to the mind, while he should be exercising the latter night and day." Seneca was aware that "to rejoice and excel in all manly exercises," would in some cases intrude into the habits of a literary man, and sometimes be even ridiculous. MORTIMER, once a celebrated artist, was tempted by his athletic frame to indulge in frequent violent exercises; and it is not without reason suspected, that habits so unfavourable to thought and study precluded that promising genius from attaining to the maturity of his talents, however he might have succeeded in invigorating his physical powers.

But to our solitude. So true is it that this love of loneliness is an early passion, that two men of genius of very opposite characters, the one a French wit and the other a French philosopher, have acknowledged that they have felt its influence, and even imagined that they had discovered its cause. The Abbé DE ST. PIERRE, in his political annals, tells us, "I remember to have heard old SEGRAIS remark, that most young people of both sexes had at one time of their lives, generally about seventeen or eighteen years of age, an inclination to retire from the world. He maintained this to be a species of melancholy, and humorously called it the small-pox of the mind, because scarce one in a thousand escaped the attack. I myself have had this distemper, but am not much marked with it."

But if the youth of genius be apt to retire from the ordinary sports of his mates, he will often substitute for them others, which are the reflections of those favourite studies which are haunting his young imagination, as men in their dreams repeat the conceptions which have habitually interested them. The amusements of such an idler have often been analogous to his later pursuits. ARIOSTO, while yet a schoolboy, seems to have been very susceptible of poetry, for he composed a sort of tragedy from the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, to be represented by his brothers and sisters, and at this time also delighted himself in translating the old French and Spanish romances. Sir WILLIAM JONES, at Harrow, divided the fields according to a map of Greece, and to each schoolfellow portioned out a dominion; and when wanting a copy of the Tempest to act from, he supplied it from his memory: we must confess that the boy Jones was reflecting in his amusements the cast of mind he displayed in his after-life, and evincing that felicity of memory and taste so prevalent in his literary character. FLORIAN'S earliest years were passed in shooting birds all day, and reading every evening an old translation of the Iliad: whenever he got a bird remarkable for its size or

* In the preface to the "Narcisse."

its plumage, he personified it by one of the names of his heroes, and raising a funeral pyre, consumed the body: collecting the ashes in an urn, he presented them to his grandfather, with a narrative of his Patroclus or Sarpedon. We seem here to detect, reflected in his boyish sports, the pleasing genius of the author of Numa Pompilius, Gonsalvo of Cordova, and William Tell. BACON, when a child, was so remarkable for thoughtful observation, that Queen Elizabeth used to call him "the young lord-keeper." The boy made a remarkable reply, when her Majesty inquiring of him his age, he said, that "He was two years younger than her Majesty's happy reign." The boy may have been tutored; but this mixture of gravity and ingenuity and political courtiership, undoubtedly caught from his father's habits, afterwards characterised Lord Bacon's manhood. I once read the letter of a contemporary of HOBBES, where I found that this great philosopher, when a lad, used to ride on packs of skins to market, to sell them for his father, who was a fellmonger; and that in the market-place he thus early began to vent his private opinions, which long afterwards so fully appeared in his writings.

For a youth to be distinguished by his equals is perhaps a criterion of talent. At that moment of life, with no flattery on the one side, and no artifice on the other, all emotion and no reflection, the boy who has obtained a predominance has acquired this merely by native powers. The boyhood of NELSON was characterised by events congenial with those of his after-days; and his father understood his character when he declared that "in whatever station he might be placed, he would climb, if possible, to the top of the tree." Some puerile anecdotes which FRANKLIN remembered of himself, betray the invention, and the firm intrepidity of his character, and even perhaps his carelessness of means to obtain a purpose. In boyhood he felt a desire for adventure; but as his father would not consent to a sea-life, he made the river near him represent the ocean: he lived on the water, and was the daring Columbus of a schoolboy's boat. A part where he and his mates stood to angle, in time became a quagmire: in the course of one day, the infant projector thought of a wharf for them to stand on, and raised it with a heap of stones deposited there for the building of a house. With that sort of practical wisdom, or Ulyssean cunning, which marked his mature character, Franklin raised his wharf at the expense of another's house. His contrivances to aid his puny labourers, with his resolution not to quit the great work till it was effected, seem to strike out to us the invention and decision of his future character. But the qualities which would attract the companions of a schoolboy, may not be those which are essential to fine genius. The captain or leader of his schoolmates is not to be disregarded: but it is the sequestered boy who may chance to be the artist or the literary character. Some facts which have been recorded of men of genius at this period are remarkable. We are told by Miss Seward, that JOHNSON, when a boy at the free-school, appeared "a huge overgrown misshapen stripling;" but was considered as a stupendous stripling; "for even at that early period of life, Johnson maintained his opinions with the same sturdy dogmatical and arrogant fierceness." The puerile characters of Lord BOLINGBROKE and Sir ROBERT WALPOLE, schoolfellows and rivals, were observed to prevail through their after-life; the liveliness and brilliancy of Bolingbroke appeared in his attacks on Walpole, whose solid and industrious qualities triumphed by resistance. A parallel instance might be pointed out in two great statesmen of our own days; in the wisdom of the one, and the wit of the other, men whom nature made rivals, and time made friends or enemies, as it happened. A curious observer, in looking over a collection of the Cambridge poems, which were formerly composed by its students, has remarked, that "Cowley from the first was quaint, Milton sublime, and Barrow copious." If then the characteristic disposition may reveal itself thus early, it affords a principle which ought not to be neglected at this obscure period of youth.

Is there then a period in youth which yields decisive marks of the character of genius? The natures of men are as various as their fortunes. Some, like diamonds, must wait to receive their splendour from the slow touches of the polisher, while others, resembling pearls, appear at once born with their beauteous lustre.

Among the inauspicious circumstances, is the feebleness of the first attempts; and we must not decide on the talents of a young man by his first works. DRYDEN and SWIFT might have been deterred from authorship, had their earliest pieces decided their fate. SMOLLETT, before he knew which way his genius would conduct him, had early conceived a high notion of his talents for dramatic poetry: his tragedy of "The Regicide" was refused by Garrick, whom for a long time he could not forgive, but continued to abuse our Roscius, through his works of genius, for having discountenanced his first work, which had none. RACINE'S earliest composition, as we may judge by some fragments his son has preserved, remarkably contrast with his writings; for these fragments abound with those points and conceits which he afterwards abhorred. The tender author of Andromache could not have been discovered while exhausting himself in running after *concetti* as surprising as the worst parts of Cowley; in

whose spirit alone he could have hit on this perplexing *concetto*, descriptive of Aurora: "Fille du Jour, qui nais devant ton père!"—"Daughter of Day, but born before thy father!" GIBBON betrayed none of the force and magnitude of his powers in his "Essay on Literature," or his attempted "History of Switzerland." JOHNSON's cadenced prose is not recognisable in the humbler simplicity of his earliest years. Many authors have begun unsuccessfully the walk they afterwards excelled in. RAPHAEL, when he first drew his meagre forms under Perugino, had not yet conceived one line of that ideal beauty which one day he of all men could alone execute. Who could have imagined, in examining the *Dream* of Raphael, that the same pencil could hereafter have poured out the miraculous *Transfiguration*? Or that, in the imitative pupil of Hudson, our country was at length to pride herself on another Raphael?

Even the manhood of genius may pass unobserved by his companions, and, like Æneas, be may be hidden in a cloud amidst his associates. The celebrated FABIUS MAXIMUS in his boyhood was called in derision "the little sheep," from the meekness and gravity of his disposition. His sedateness and taciturnity, his indifference to juvenile amusements, his slowness and difficulty in learning, and his ready submission to his equals, induced them to consider him as one irrecoverably stupid. The greatness of mind, unalterable courage, and invincible character, which FABIUS afterwards displayed, they then imagined had lain concealed under the apparent contrary qualities. The boy of genius may indeed seem slow and dull even to the phlegmatic; for thoughtful and observing dispositions conceal themselves in timorous silent characters, who have not yet experienced their strength; and that assiduous love, which cannot tear itself away from the secret instruction it is perpetually imbibing, cannot be easily distinguished from the pertinacity of the mere plodder. We often hear, from the early companions of a man of genius, that at school he appeared heavy and unpromising. Rousseau imagined that the childhood of some men is accompanied by this seeming and deceitful dulness, which is the sign of a profound genius; and Roger Ascham has placed among "the best natures for learning, the sad-natured and hard-witted child;" that is, the thoughtful, or the melancholic, and the slow. The young painters, to ridicule the persevering labours of DOMENICHINO, which were at first heavy and unpromising, called him "the great ox;" and Passeri, while he has happily expressed the still labours of his concealed genius, *sua taciturna lentezza*, his silent slowness, expresses his surprise at the accounts he received of the early life of this great artist. "It is difficult to believe, what many assert, that, from the beginning, this great painter had a ruggedness about him which entirely incapacitated him from learning his profession; and they have heard from himself, that he quite despaired of success. Yet I cannot comprehend how such vivacious talents, with a mind so finely organised, and accompanied with such favourable dispositions for the art, would show such signs of utter incapacity; I rather think that it is a mistake in the proper knowledge of genius, which some imagine indicates itself most decisively by its sudden vehemence, showing itself like lightning, and like lightning passing away."

A parallel case we find in GOLDSMITH, who passed through an unpromising youth; he declared that he was never attached to literature till he was thirty; that poetry had no peculiar charms for him till that age*; and, indeed, to his latest hour he was surprising his friends by productions which they had imagined he was incapable of composing. HUME was considered, for his sobriety and assiduity, as competent to become a steady merchant; and it was said of BOILEAU that he had no great understanding, but would speak ill of no one. This circumstance of the character in youth being entirely mistaken, or entirely opposite to the subsequent one of mature life, has been noticed of many. Even a discerning parent or master has entirely failed to develop the genius of the youth, who has afterwards ranked among eminent men; we ought as little to decide from early unfavourable appearances, as from inequality of talent. The great ISAAC BARROW's father used to say, that if it pleased God to take from him any of his children, he hoped it might be Isaac, as the least promising; and during the three years Barrow passed at the Charter-house, he was remarkable only for the utter negligence of his studies and of his person. The mother of SHERIDAN, herself a literary female, pronounced early that he was the dullest and most hopeless of her sons. BODMER, at the head of the literary class in Switzerland, who had so frequently discovered and animated the literary youths of his country, could never detect the latent genius of GESNER: after a repeated examination of the young man, he put his parents in despair with the hopeless award that a mind of so ordinary a cast must confine itself to mere writing and accompts. One fact, however, Bodmer had overlooked when he pronounced the fate of our poet and artist—the dull youth, who could not retain barren words, discovered an active fancy in

* This is a remarkable expression from Goldsmith: but it is much more so when we hear it from Lord Byron. See a note in the following chapter, on "The first Studies."

the images of things. While at his grammar lessons, as it happened to Lucian, he was employing tedious hours in modelling in wax, groups of men, animals, and other figures, the rod of the pedagogue often interrupted the fingers of our infant moulder, who never ceased working to amuse his little sisters with his waxen creatures, which constituted all his happiness. Those arts of imitation were already possessing the soul of the boy GESNER, to which afterwards it became so entirely devoted.

Thus it happens that in the first years of life the education of the youth may not be the education of his genius; he lives unknown to himself and others. In all these cases nature had dropped the seeds in the soil: but even a happy disposition must be concealed amidst adverse circumstances: I repeat that genius can only make that its own, which is homogeneous with its nature. It has happened to some men of genius during a long period of their lives, that an unsettled impulse, unable to discover the object of its aptitude, a thirst and fever in the temperament of too sentient a being, which cannot find the occupation to which only it can attach itself, has sunk into a melancholy and querulous spirit, weary with the burthen of existence; but the instant the latent talent had declared itself, his first work, the eager offspring of desire and love, has astonished the world at once with the birth and the maturity of genius.

We are told that PELLEGRINO TIBALDI, who afterwards obtained the glorious title of "the reformed Michael Angelo," long felt the strongest internal dissatisfaction at his own proficiency, and that one day, in melancholy and despair, he had retired from the city, resolved to starve himself to death: his friend discovered him, and having persuaded him to change his pursuits from painting to architecture, he soon rose to eminence. This story D'Argenville throws some doubt over; but as Tibaldi during twenty years abstained from his pencil, a singular circumstance seems explained by an extraordinary occurrence. TASSO with feverish anxiety pondered on five different subjects before he could decide in the choice of his epic; the same embarrassment was long the fate of GIBBON on the subject of his History. Some have sunk into a deplorable state of utter languishment, from the circumstance of being deprived of the means of pursuing their beloved study, as in the case of the chemist BERGMAN. His friends, to gain him over to the more lucrative professions, deprived him of his books of natural history; a plan which nearly proved fatal to the youth, who with declining health quitted the university. At length ceasing to struggle with the conflicting desire within him, his renewed enthusiasm for his favourite science restored the health he had lost in abandoning it.

It was the view of the tomb of Virgil which so powerfully influenced the innate genius of BOCCACCIO, and fixed his instant decision. As yet young, and in the neighbourhood of Naples, wandering for recreation, he reached the tomb of the Mantuan. Pausing before it, his youthful mind began to meditate. Struck by the universal glory of that great name, he lamented his own fortune to be occupied by the obscure details of merchandise; already he sighed to emulate the fame of the Roman, and as Villani tells us, from that day he abandoned for ever the occupations of commerce, dedicating himself to literature. PROCTOR, the lost Phidias of our country, would often say, that he should never have quitted his mercantile situation, but for the accidental sight of Barry's picture of Venus rising from the sea; a picture which produced so immediate an effect on his mind, that it determined him to quit a lucrative occupation. Surely we cannot account for such sudden effusions of the mind, and such instant decisions, but by the principle of that predisposition which only waits for an occasion to declare itself.

Abundant facts exhibit genius unequivocally discovering itself in youth. In general, perhaps, a master-mind exhibits precocity. "Whatever a young man at first applies himself to, is commonly his delight afterwards." This remark was made by HARTLEY, who has related an anecdote of the infancy of his genius, which indicated the manhood. He declared to his daughter that the intention of writing a book upon the nature of man, was conceived in his mind when he was a very little boy—when swinging backwards and forwards upon a gate, not more than nine or ten years old; he was then meditating upon the nature of his own mind, how man was made, and for what future end. Such was the true origin, in a boy of ten years old, of his celebrated book on "The Frame, the Duty, and the Expectation of Man." JOHN HUNTER conceived his notion of the principle of life, which to his last day formed the subject of his inquiries and experiments, when he was very young; for at that period of life, Mr. Abernethy tells us, he began his observations on the incubated egg, which suggested or corroborated his opinions.

A learned friend, and an observer of men of science, has supplied me with a remark highly deserving notice. It is an observation that will generally hold good, that the most important systems of theory, however late they may be published, have been formed at a very early period of life. This important observation may be verified by some striking facts. A most curious

one will be found in Lord BACON's letter to Father Fulgentio, where he gives an account of his projecting his philosophy thirty years before, during his youth. MILTON from early youth mused on the composition of an Epic. DE THOU has himself told us, that from his tender youth his mind was full of the idea of composing a history of his own times; and his whole life was passed in preparation, and in a continued accession of materials for a future period. From the age of twenty, MONTESQUIEU was preparing the materials of *L'Esprit des Loix*, by extracts from the immense volumes of civil law. TILLEMONT'S vast labours were traced out in his mind at the early age of nineteen, on reading Baronius; and some of the finest passages in RACINE'S tragedies were composed while a pupil, wandering in the woods of the Port-Royal. So true is it that the seeds of many of our great literary and scientific works were lying, for many years antecedent to their being given to the world, in a latent state of germination*.

The predisposition of genius has declared itself in painters and poets, who were such before they understood the nature of colours and the arts of verse; and this vehement propensity, so mysteriously constitutional, may be traced in other intellectual characters besides those which belong to the class of imagination. It was said that PITT was *born* a minister; the late Dr. SHAW I always considered as one *born* a naturalist, and I know a great literary antiquary who seems to me to have been also *born* such; for the passion of *curiosity* is as intense a faculty, or instinct, with some casts of mind, as is that of *invention* with poets and painters: I confess that to me it is *genius* in a form in which genius has not yet been suspected to appear. One of the biographers of Sir HANS SLOANE expresses himself in this manner: "Our author's *thirst* for knowledge seems to have been *born* with him; so that his *Cabinet of Rarities* may be said to have commenced with *his being*." This strange metaphorical style has only confused an obscure truth. SLOANE early in life felt an irresistible impulse which inspired him with the most enlarged views of the productions of nature, and he exulted in their accomplishment; for in his will he has solemnly recorded, that his collections were the fruits of his early devotion; *having had from my youth a strong inclination to the study of plants and all other productions of nature.* The vehement passion of PEIRESC for knowledge, according to accounts which Gassendi received from old men who had known him as a child, broke out as soon as he had been taught his alphabet; for then his delight was to be handling books and papers, and his perpetual inquiries after their contents obliged them to invent something to quiet the child's insatiable curiosity, who was hurt when told that he had not the capacity to understand them. He did not study as an ordinary scholar, for he never read but with perpetual researches. At ten years of age, his passion for the studies of antiquity was kindled at the sight of some ancient coins dug up in his neighbourhood; then, that vehement passion for knowledge "began to burn like fire in a forest," as Gassendi happily describes the fervour and amplitude of the mind of this man of vast learning. Bayle, who was an experienced judge in the history of genius, observes on two friars, one of whom was haunted by a strong disposition to *genealogical*, and the other to *geographical* pursuits, that, "let a man do what he will, if nature incline us to certain things, there is no preventing the gratification of our desire, though it lies hid under a monk's frock." It is not, therefore, as the world is apt to imagine, only poets and painters for whom is reserved this restless and impetuous propensity for their particular pursuits; I claim it for the man of science as well as for the man of imagination.—And I confess, that I consider this strong bent of the mind in men, eminent in pursuits in which imagination is little concerned, and whom men of genius have chosen to remove so far from their class, as another gifted aptitude. They, too, share in the glorious fever of genius, and we feel how just was the expression formerly used, of "their *thirst* for knowledge."

But to return to the men of genius who answer more strictly to the popular notion of inventors. We have BOCCACCIO'S own words for a proof of his early natural tendency to tale-writing, in a passage of his genealogy of the Gods: "Before seven years of age, when as yet I had met with no stories, was without a master, and hardly knew my letters, I had a natural talent for fiction, and produced some little tales." Thus the *Decame-*

* I need not to be reminded, that I am not worth mentioning among the illustrious men who have long formed the familiar subjects of my delightful researches. But with the middling as well as with the great, the same habits must operate. Early in life, I was struck by the inductive philosophy of Bacon, and sought after a Moral Experimental Philosophy; and I had then in my mind an observation of Lord Bolingbroke's, for I see I quoted it thirty years ago, that "Abstract or general propositions, though never so true, appear obscure or doubtful to us very often till they are explained by examples." So far back as in 1793, I published "A Dissertation on Anecdotes," with the simplicity of a young votary; there I deduced results, and threw out a magnificent project not very practicable. From that time to the hour I am now writing, my metal has been running in this mould, and I still keep casting philosophy into anecdotes, and anecdotes into philosophy. As I began I fear I shall end.

rone was appearing much earlier than we suppose. DESCARTES, while yet a boy, indulged such habits of deep meditation, that he was nicknamed by his companions "The Philosopher," always questioning, and ever settling the cause and the effect. He was twenty-five years of age before he left the army, but the propensity for meditation had been early formed; and he has himself given an account of the pursuits which occupied his youth, and of the progress of his genius; of the secret struggle which he so long maintained with his own mind, wandering in concealment over the world for more than twenty years, and, as he says of himself, like the statuary labouring to draw out a Minerva from the marble block. MICHAEL ANGELO, as yet a child, wherever he went, busied himself in drawing; and when his noble parents, hurt that a man of genius was disturbing the line of their ancestry, forced him to relinquish the pencil, the infant artist flew to the chisel: the art which was in his soul would not allow of idle hands. LOPE DE VEGA, VELASQUEZ, ARIOSTO, and TASSO, are all said to have betrayed at their school-tasks the most marked indications of their subsequent characteristics.

This decision of the impulse of genius is apparent in MURILLO. This young artist was undistinguished at the place of his birth. A brother artist returning home from London, where he had studied under Van Dyk, surprised MURILLO by a chaste, and to him hitherto unknown, manner. Instantly he conceived the project of quitting his native Seville and flying to Italy—the fever of genius broke forth with all its restlessness. But he was destitute of the most ordinary means to pursue a journey, and forced to an expedient, he purchased a piece of canvas, which, dividing into parts, he painted on each, figures of saints, landscapes, and flowers; an humble merchandise of art adapted to the taste and devout feelings of the times, and which were readily sold to the adventurers to the Indies. With these small means he departed, having communicated his project to no one except to a beloved sister, whose tears could not prevail to keep the lad at home; the impetuous impulse had blinded him to the perils and the impracticability of his wild project. He reached Madrid, where the great VELASQUEZ, his countryman, was struck by the ingenuous simplicity of the youth, who urgently requested letters for Rome; but when that noble genius understood the purport of this romantic journey, VELASQUEZ assured him that he need not proceed to Italy to learn the art he loved. The great master opened the royal galleries to the youth, and cherished his studies. MURILLO returned to his native city, where from his obscurity he had never been missed, having ever lived a retired life of silent labour; but this painter of nature returned to make the city which had not noticed his absence the theatre of his glory.

The same imperious impulse drove CALLOT, at the age of twelve years, from his father's roof. His parents, from prejudices of birth, had conceived that the art of engraving was one beneath the studies of their son; but the boy had listened to stories of the miracles of Italian art, and with a curiosity predominant over any self-consideration, one morning the genius flew away. Many days had not elapsed, when finding himself in the utmost distress, with a gang of gipsies he arrived at Florence. A merchant of Nancy discovered him, and returned the reluctant boy of genius to his home. Again he flies to Italy, and again his brother discovers him, and reconducts him to his parents. The father, whose patience and forgiveness were now exhausted, permitted his son to become the most original genius of French art; one who, in his vivacious groups, the touch of his graver, and the natural expression of his figures, anticipated the creations of Hogarth.

Facts of this decisive character are abundant. See the boy NANTEUIL hiding himself in a tree to pursue the delightful exercise of his pencil, while his parents are averse to their son practising his young art! See HANDEL, intended for a doctor of the civil laws, and whom no parental discouragement could deprive of his enthusiasm, for ever touching harpsichords, and having secretly conveyed a musical instrument to a retired apartment, listen to him when, sitting through the night, he awakens his harmonious spirit! Observe FERGUSON, the child of a peasant, acquiring the art of reading without any one suspecting it, by listening to his father teaching his brother; observe him making a wooden watch without the slightest knowledge of mechanism; and while a shepherd, studying, like an ancient Chaldean, the phenomena of the heavens, on a celestial globe formed by his own hand. That great mechanic, SMEATON, when a child, disdained the ordinary playthings of his age; he collected the tools of workmen, observed them at their work, and asked questions till he could work himself. One day, having watched some millwrights, the child was shortly after, to the distress of the family, discovered in a situation of extreme danger, fixing up at the top of a barn a rude windmill. Many circumstances of this nature occurred before his sixth year. His father, an attorney, sent him up to London to be brought up to the same profession; but he declared that "the study of the law did not suit the *bent of his genius*;" a term he frequently used. He addressed a strong memorial to his father, to show his utter incompetency to study law; and the good sense of the father aban-

doned Smeaton "to the bent of his genius in his own way." Such is the history of the man who raised the Eddystone lighthouse, in the midst of the waves, like the rock on which it stands.

Can we hesitate to believe, that in such minds there was a resistless and mysterious propensity, "growing with the growth" of these youths, who seem to have been placed out of the influence of that casual excitement, or any other of those sources of genius, so frequently assigned for its production?

Yet these cases are not more striking than one related of the Abbé La Caille, who ranked among the first astronomers of the age. La Caille was the son of the parish clerk of a village. At the age of ten years his father sent him every evening to ring the church bell, but the boy always returned home late: his father was angry, and beat him, and still the boy returned an hour after he had rung the bell. The father, suspecting something mysterious in his conduct, one evening watched him. He saw his son ascend the steeple, ring the bell as usual, and remain there during an hour. When the unlucky boy descended, he trembled like one caught in the fact, and on his knees confessed that the pleasure he took in watching the stars from the steeple was the real cause which detained him from home. As the father was not born to be an astronomer, he flogged his son severely. The youth was found weeping in the streets by a man of science, who, when he discovered in a boy of ten years of age a passion for contemplating the stars at night, and one too, who had discovered an observatory in a steeple, decided that the seal of nature had impressed itself on the genius of that boy. Relieving the parent from the son, and the son from the parent, he assisted the young La Caille in his passionate pursuit, and the event completely justified the prediction. How children feel a predisposition for the studies of astronomy, or mechanics, or architecture, or natural history, is that secret in nature we have not guessed. There may be a virgin thought as well as a virgin habit—nature before education—which first opens the mind, and ever afterwards is shaping its tender folds. Accidents may occur to call it forth, but thousands of youths have found themselves in parallel situations with Smeaton, Ferguson, and La Caille, without experiencing their energies.

The case of Clairon, the great French tragic actress, who seems to have been an actress before she saw a theatre, deserves attention. This female, destined to be a sublime tragedian, was of the lowest extraction; the daughter of a violent and illiterate woman, who with blows and menaces was driving about the child all day to manual labour. "I know not," says Clairon, "whence I derive my disgust, but I could not bear the idea to be a mere workwoman, or to remain inactive in a corner." In her eleventh year, being locked up in a room as a punishment, with the windows fastened, she climbed upon a chair to look about her. A new object instantly absorbed her attention. In the house opposite she observed a celebrated actress amidst her family; her daughter was performing her dancing lesson: the girl Clairon, the future Melpomene, was struck by the influence of this graceful and affectionate scene. "All my little being collected itself into my eyes; I lost not a single motion; as soon as the lesson ended, all the family applauded, and the mother embraced the daughter. The difference of her fate and mine filled me with profound grief; my tears hindered me from seeing any longer, and when the palpitations of my heart allowed me to re-ascend the chair, all had disappeared." This scene was a discovery; from that moment Clairon knew no rest, and rejoiced when she could get her mother to confine her in that room. The happy girl was a divinity to the unhappy one, whose susceptible genius imitated her in every gesture and every motion; and Clairon soon showed the effect of her ardent studies. She betrayed in the common intercourse of life, all the graces she had taught herself; she charmed her friends, and even softened her barbarous mother; in a word, the enthusiastic girl was an actress without knowing what an actress was.

In this case of the youth of genius, are we to conclude that the accidental view of a young actress practising her studies imparted the character of Clairon? Could a mere chance occurrence have given birth to those faculties which produced a sublime tragedian? In all arts there are talents which may be acquired by imitation and reflection,—and thus far may genius be educated; but there are others which are entirely the result of native sensibility, which often secretly torment the possessor, and which may even be lost from the want of development, dissolved into a state of languor from which many have not recovered. Clairon, before she saw the young actress, and having yet no conception of a theatre, for she had never entered one, had in her soul that latent faculty which creates a dramatic genius. "Had I not felt like Dido," she once exclaimed, "I could not have thus personified her!"

The force of impressions received in the warm susceptibility of the childhood of genius, is probably little known to us; but we may perceive them also working in the *moral character*, which frequently discovers itself in childhood, and which manhood cannot always conceal, however it may alter. The intellectual and the moral character

are unquestionably closely allied. ERASMUS acquaints us, that Sir THOMAS MORE had something ludicrous in his aspect, tending to a smile,—a feature which his portraits preserve; and that he was more inclined to pleasantry and jesting, than to the gravity of the chancellor. This circumstance he imputes to Sir Thomas More "being from a child so delighted with humour, that he seemed to be even born for it." And we know that he died as he had lived, with a jest on his lips. The hero, who came at length to regret that he had but one world to conquer, betrayed the majesty of his restless genius when but a youth. Had Aristotle been nigh, when, solicited to join in the course, the princely boy replied, that "He would run in no career where kings were not the competitors," the prescient tutor might have recognised in his pupil the future and successful rival of Darius and Porus.

A narrative of the earliest years of Prince Henry, by one of his attendants, forms an authentic collection of juvenile anecdotes, which made me feel very forcibly, that there are some children who deserve to have a biographer at their side; but anecdotes of children are the rarest of biographies, and I deemed it a singular piece of good fortune to have recovered such a remarkable evidence of the precocity of character*. Professor Dugald Stewart has noticed a fact in ARNAULD'S infancy, which, considered in connexion with his subsequent life, affords a good illustration of the force of impressions received in the first dawn of reason. ARNAULD, who, to his eightieth year, passed through a life of theological controversy, when a child, amusing himself in the library of the Cardinal Du Perron, requested to have a pen given to him: "For what purpose?" inquired the cardinal. "To write books, like you, against the Huguenots." The cardinal, then aged and infirm, could not conceal his joy at the prospect of so hopeful a successor; and placing the pen in his hand, said, "I give it you as the dying shepherd, Damœtas, bequeathed his pipe to the little Corydon." Other children might have asked for a pen—but to write against the Huguenots evinced a deeper feeling and a wider association of ideas, indicating the future polemic.

Some of these facts, we conceive, afford decisive evidence of that instinct in genius, that primary quality of mind, sometimes called organisation, which has inflamed a war of words by an equivocal term. We repeat that this faculty of genius can exist independent of education, and where it is wanting, education can never confer it: it is an impulse, an instinct always working in the character of "the chosen mind;"

> "One with our feelings and our powers,
> And rather part of us, than ours."

In the history of genius there are unquestionably many secondary causes of considerable influence in developing, or even crushing the germ—these have been of late often detected, and sometimes carried to a ridiculous extreme; but among them none seem more remarkable than the first studies and the first habits.

* I have preserved this manuscript narrative in 'Curiosities of Literature."

CHAPTER VI.

The first studies.—The self-educated are marked by stubborn peculiarities.—Their errors.—Their improvement from the neglect or contempt they incur.—The history of self-education in Moses Mendelssohn.—Friends usually prejudicial in the youth of genius.—A remarkable interview between Petrarch in his first studies, and his literary adviser.—Exhortation.

THE first studies form an epoch in the history of genius, and unquestionably have sensibly influenced its productions. Often have the first impressions stamped a character on the mind adapted to receive one, as the first step into life has often determined its walk. But this, for ourselves, is a far distant period in our existence, which is lost in the horizon of our own recollections, and is usually unobserved by others.

Many of those peculiarities of men of genius which are not fortunate, and some which have hardened the character in its mould, may, however, be traced to this period. Physicians tell us that there is a certain point in youth at which the constitution is formed, and on which the sanity of life revolves; the character of genius experiences a similar dangerous period. Early bad tastes, early peculiar habits, early defective instructions, all the egotistical pride of an untamed intellect, are those evil spirits which will dog genius to its grave. An early attachment to the works of Sir Thomas Browne produced in JOHNSON an excessive admiration of that Latinised English, which violated the native graces of the language; and the peculiar style of Gibbon is traced by himself "to the constant habit of speaking one language, and writing another." The first studies of REMBRANDT affected his after-labours. The peculiarity of shadow which marks all his pictures, originated in the circumstance of his father's mill receiving light from an aperture at the top, which habituated the artist afterwards to view all objects as if seen in that magical light. The intellectual POUSSIN, as Nicholas has been called, could never, from an early devotion to the fine statues of antiquity, extricate his genius on the canvas from the

hard forms of marble: he sculptured with hi pencil; and that cold austerity of tone, still more remarkable in his last pictures, as it became mannered, chills the spectator on a first glance. When POPE was a child, he found in his mother's closet a small library of mystical devotion; but it was not suspected, till the fact was discovered, that the effusions of love and religion poured forth in his Eloisa, were caught from the seraphic raptures of those erotic mystics, who to the last retained a place in his library among the classical bards of antiquity. The accidental perusal of Quintus Curtius first made BOYLE, to use his own words, "in love with other than pedantic books, and conjured up in him an unsatisfied appetite of knowledge; so that he thought he owed more to Quintus Curtius than did Alexander." From the perusal of Rycaut's folio of Turkish history in childhood, the noble and impassioned bard of our times retained those indelible impressions which gave life and motion to the "Giaour," "the Corsair," and "Alp." A voyage to the country produced the scenery. Rycaut only communicated the impulse to a mind susceptible of the poetical character; and without this Turkish history we should still have had the poet*.

The influence of first studies, in the formation of the character of genius, is a moral phenomenon, which has not sufficiently attracted our notice. FRANKLIN acquaints us, that when young and wanting books, he accidentally found De Foe's "Essay on Projects," from which work impressions were derived which afterwards influenced some of the principal events of his life. The lectures of REYNOLDS probably originated in the essays of Richardson. It is acknowledged that these first made him a painter, and not long afterwards an author; and it is said that many of the principles in his lectures may be traced in those first studies. Many were the indelible and glowing impressions caught by the ardent Reynolds from those bewildering pages of enthusiasm! Sir WALTER RAWLEIGH, according to a family tradition, when a young man, was perpetually reading and conversing on the discoveries of Columbus, and the conquests of Cortez and Pizarro. His character, as well as the great events of his life, seem to have been inspired by his favourite histories; to pass beyond the discoveries of the Spaniards became a passion, and the vision of his life. It is formally testified, that from a copy of Vegetius *de Re Militari*, in the school library of St. Paul's, MARLBOROUGH imbibed his passion for a military life. If he could not understand the text, the prints were, in such a mind, sufficient to awaken the passion for military glory. ROUSSEAU in early youth, full of his Plutarch, while he was also devouring the trash of romances, could only conceive human nature in the colossal forms, or be affected by the infirm sensibility of an imagination mastering all his faculties; thinking like a Roman, and feeling like a Sybarite. The same circumstance happened to CATHERINE MACAULEY, who herself has told us how she owed the bent of her character to the early reading of the Roman historians; but combining Roman admiration with English faction, she violated truth in English characters, and exaggerated romance in her Roman. But the permanent effect of a solitary bias in the youth of genius, impelling the whole current of his after-life, is strikingly displayed in the remarkable character of Archdeacon BLACKBURNE, the author of the famous "Confessional," and the curious "Memoirs of Hollis," written with such a republican fierceness.

I had long considered the character of our archdeacon as a *lusus politicus et theologicus*. Having subscribed to the Articles, and enjoying the archdeaconry, he was writing against subscription and the whole hierarchy, with a spirit so irascible and caustic, that one would have suspected that, like Prynne and Bastwick, the archdeacon had already lost both his ears; while his antipathy to monarchy might have done honour to a Roundhead of the Rota Club. The secret

* The following manuscript note, by Lord Byron on this passage, cannot fail to interest the lovers of poetry, as well as the inquirers into the history of the human mind. His lordship's recollections of his first readings will not alter the tendency of my conjecture; it only proves that he had read much more of Eastern history and manners than Rycaut's folio, which probably led to this class of books.

"Knolles—Cantemir—De Tott—Lady M. W. Montagu—Hawkins's translation from Mignot's History of the Turks—the Arabian Nights—All travels or histories or books upon the East I could meet with, I had read, as well as Rycaut, before I was *ten years old*. I think the Arabian Nights first. After these I preferred the history of naval actions, Don Quixote, and Smollett's novels, particularly Roderick Random, and I was passionate for the Roman History.

"When a boy I could never bear to read any Poetry whatever without disgust and reluctance."—*MS. note by Lord Byron.* Latterly Lord Byron acknowledged in a conversation held in Greece with Count Gamba, not long before he died, "The Turkish History was one of the first books that gave me pleasure when a child; and I believe it had much influence on my subsequent wishes to visit the Levant; and gave perhaps the Oriental colouring which is observed in my poetry."

I omitted the following note in the last Edition, but I shall now preserve it, as it may enter into the history of his Lordship's character.

"When I was in Turkey I was oftener tempted to turn Mussulman than poet, and have often regretted since that I did not. 1818."

of these volcanic explosions was only revealed in a letter accidentally preserved. In the youth of our spirited archdeacon, when fox-hunting was his deepest study, it happened at the house of a relation, that on a rainy day he fell, among other garret lumber, on some worm-eaten volumes which had once been the careful collections of his great-grandfather, an Oliverian justice. "These," says he, "I conveyed to my lodging-room, and there became acquainted with the manners and principles of many excellent old Puritans, and then laid the foundation of my own." The enigma is now solved! Archdeacon BLACKBURNE, in his seclusion in Yorkshire amidst the Oliverian justice's library, shows that we are in want of a Cervantes but not of a Quixote, and Yorkshire might yet be as renowned a country as La Mancha; for political romances, it is presumed, may be as fertile of ridicule as any of the folios of chivalry.

We may thus mark the influence through life of those first unobserved impressions on the character of genius, which every author has not recorded.

Education, however indispensable in a cultivated age, produces nothing on the side of genius. Where education ends genius often begins. GRAY was asked if he recollected when he first felt the strong predilection to poetry; he replied, that "he believed it was when he began to read Virgil for his own amusement, and not in school hours as a task." Such is the force of self-education in genius, that the celebrated physiologist, JOHN HUNTER, who was entirely self-educated, evinced such penetration in his anatomical discoveries, that he has brought into notice passages from writers he was unable to read, and which had been overlooked by profound scholars *.

That the education of genius must be its own work, we may appeal to every one of the family. It is not always fortunate, for many die amidst a waste of talents and the wreck of mind.

> Many a soul sublime
> Has felt the influence of malignant star.

An unfavourable position in society is a usual obstruction in the course of this self-education; and a man of genius, through half his life, has held a contest with a bad, or with no education. There is a race of the late-taught, who, with a capacity of leading in the first rank, are mortified to discover themselves only on a level with their contemporaries. WINKELMANN, who passed his youth in obscure misery as a village schoolmaster, paints feelings which strikingly contrast with his avocations. "I formerly filled the office of a schoolmaster with the greatest punctuality; and I taught the A, B, C, to children with filthy heads, at the moment I was aspiring after the knowledge of the beautiful, and meditating, low to myself, on the similes of Homer; then I said to myself, as I still say, 'Peace, my soul, thy strength shall surmount thy cares.'" The obstructions of so unhappy a self-education essentially injured his ardent genius, and long he secretly sorrowed at this want of early patronage, and these habits of life so discordant with the habits of his mind. "I am unfortunately one of those whom the Greeks named *ὀψιμαθεῖς*, *sero sapientes*, the late-learned, for I have appeared too late in the world and in Italy. To have done something, it was necessary that I should have had an education analogous to my pursuits, and at your age." This class of the *late-learned* is a useful distinction. It is so with a sister-art; one of the greatest musicians of our country assures me, that the ear is as latent with many; there are the late-learned even in the musical world. BUDÆUS declared that he was both "self-taught and late-taught."

The SELF-EDUCATED are marked by stubborn peculiarities. Often abounding with talent, but rarely with talent in its place, their native prodigality has to dread a plethora of genius and a delirium of wit; or else, hard but irregular students rich in acquisition, they find how their huddled knowledge, like corn heaped in a granary, for want of ventilation and stirring, perishes in its own masses. Not having attended to the process of their own minds, and little acquainted with that of other men, they cannot throw out their intractable knowledge, nor with sympathy awaken by its softening touches the thoughts of others. To conduct their native impulse, which had all along driven them, is a secret not always discovered, or else discovered late in life. Hence it has happened with some of this race, that their first work has not announced genius, and their last is stamped with it. Some are often judged by their first work, and when they have surpassed themselves, it is long ere it is acknowledged. They have improved themselves by the very neglect or even contempt which their unfortunate efforts were doomed to meet; and when once they have learned what is beautiful, they discover a living but unsuspected source in their own wild but unregarded originality. Glorying in their strength at the time that they are betraying their weakness, yet are they still mighty in that enthusiasm which is only disciplined by its own fierce habits. Never can the native faculty of genius with its creative warmth be crushed out of the human soul; it will work itself out beneath the encumbrance of the most uncultivated minds, even amidst the deep perplexed feelings and the tumultuous thoughts of the most visionary enthusiast, who is

* Life of John Hunter, by Dr. Adams, p. 59, where the case is curiously illustrated.

often only a man of genius misplaced *. We may find a whole race of these self-taught among the unknown writers of the old romances, and the ancient ballads of European nations; there sleep many a Homer and Virgil—legitimate heirs of their genius though possessors of decayed estates. BUNYAN is the Spenser of the people. The fire burned towards Heaven, although the altar was rude and rustic.

BARRY, the painter, has left behind him works not to be turned over by the connoisseur by rote, nor the artist who dares not be just. That enthusiast, with a temper of mind resembling Rousseau's, but with coarser feelings, was the same creature of untamed imagination consumed by the same passions, with the same fine intellect disordered, and the same fortitude of soul; but he found his self-taught pen, like his pencil, betray his genius. A vehement enthusiasm breaks through his ill-composed works, throwing the sparks of his bold conceptions into the soul of the youth of genius. When, in his character of professor, he delivered his lectures at the academy, at every pause his auditors rose in a tumult, and at every close their hands returned to him the proud feelings he adored. This gifted but self-educated man, once listening to the children of genius whom he had created about him, exclaimed, "Go it, go it, my boys! they did so at Athens." This self-formed genius could throw up his native mud into the very heaven of his invention!

But even such pages as those of BARRY'S are the aliment of young genius. Before we can discern the beautiful, must we not be endowed with the susceptibility of love? Must not the disposition be formed before even the object appears? I have witnessed the young artist of genius glow and start over the reveries of the uneducated BARRY, but pause and meditate, and inquire over the mature elegance of REYNOLDS; in the one he caught the passion for beauty, and in the other he discovered the beautiful; with the one he was warm and restless, and with the other calm and satisfied.

Of the difficulties overcome in the self-education of genius, we have a remarkable instance in the character of MOSES MENDELSSOHN, on whom literary Germany has bestowed the honourable title of the Jewish Socrates†." So great apparently were the invincible obstructions which barred out Mendelsohn from the world of literature and philosophy, that, in the history of men of genius, it is something like taking in the history of man, the savage of Aveyron from his woods,—who, destitute of a human language, should at length create a model of eloquence; who, without the faculty of conceiving a figure, should at length be capable of adding to the demonstrations of Euclid; and who, without a complex idea and with few sensations, should at length, in the sublimest strain of metaphysics, open to the world a new view of the immortality of the soul!

Mendelsohn, the son of a poor rabbin, in a village in Germany, received an education completely rabbinical, and its nature must be comprehended, or the term of *education* would be misunderstood. The Israelites in Poland and Germany live with all the restrictions of their ceremonial law in an insulated state, and are not always instructed in the language of the country of their birth. They employ for their common intercourse a barbarous or *patois* Hebrew; while the sole studies of the young rabbins are strictly confined to the Talmud, of which the fundamental principle, like the Sonna of the Turks, is a pious rejection of every species of profane learning. This ancient jealous spirit, which walls in the understanding and the faith of man, was to shut out what the imitative Catholics afterwards called heresy. It is, then, these numerous folios of the Talmud which the true Hebraic student contemplates through all the seasons of life, as the Patuecos in their low valley imagine their surrounding mountains to be the confines of the universe.

Of such a nature was the plan of MENDELSSOHN'S first studies; but even in his boyhood this conflict of study occasioned an agitation of his spirits, which affected his life ever after. Rejecting the Talmudical dreamers, he caught a nobler spirit from the celebrated Maimonides; and his native sagacity was already clearing up the surrounding darkness. An enemy not less hostile to the enlargement of mind than voluminous legends, presented itself in the indigence of his father, who was compelled to send away the youth on foot to Berlin, to find labour and bread.

At Berlin, Mendelsohn becomes an amanuensis

* "One assertion I will venture to make, as suggested by my own experience, that there exist folios on the human understanding and the nature of man which would have a far juster claim to their high rank and celebrity, if in the whole huge volume there could be found as much fulness of heart and intellect as burst forth in many a simple page of George Fox and Jacob Behmen."—Mr. Coleridge's Biographia Literaria, i. 143.

† I composed the life of MENDELSSOHN so far back as in 1798, in a periodical publication, whence our late biographers have drawn their notices; a juvenile production, which happened to excite the attention of the late BARRY, then not personally known to me; and he gave all the immortality his poetical pencil could bestow on this man of genius, by immediately placing in his Elysium of Genius, MENDELSSOHN shaking hands with ADDISON, who wrote on the truth of the Christian religion, and near LOCKE, the English master of MENDELSSOHN'S mind.

to another poor rabbin, who could only still initiate him into the theology, the jurisprudence, and the scholastic philosophy of his people. Thus, he was as yet no farther advanced in that philosophy of the mind in which he was one day to be the rival of Plato and Locke, nor in that knowledge of literature which was finally to place him among the first polished critics of Germany.

Some unexpected event occurs which gives the first great impulse to the mind of genius. MENDELSSOHN received this from the companion of his misery and his studies, a man of congenial but maturer powers. He was a Polish Jew, expelled from the communion of the orthodox, and the calumniated student was now a vagrant, with more sensibility than fortitude. But this vagrant was a philosopher, a poet, a naturalist, and a mathematician. MENDELSSOHN, at a distant day, never alluded to him without tears. Thrown together into the same situation, they approached each other by the same sympathies, and communicating in the only language which MENDELSSOHN could speak, the Polander voluntarily undertook his literary education.

Then was seen one of the most extraordinary spectacles in the history of modern literature. Two houseless Hebrew youths might be discovered, in the moonlit streets of Berlin, sitting in retired corners, or on the steps of some porch, the one instructing the other, with a Euclid in his hand; but what is more extraordinary, it was a Hebrew version, composed by the master for a pupil who knew no other language. Who could then have imagined that the future Plato of Germany was sitting on those steps!

The Polander, whose deep melancholy had settled on his heart, died—yet he had not lived in vain, since the electric spark that lighted up the soul of MENDELSSOHN had fallen from his own.

MENDELSSOHN was now left alone; his mind teeming with its chaos, and still master of no other language than that barren idiom which was incapable of expressing the ideas he was meditating on. He had scarcely made a step into the philosophy of his age, and the genius of MENDELSSOHN had probably been lost to Germany, had not the singularity of his studies and the cast of his mind been detected by the sagacity of Dr. Kisch. The aid of this physician was momentous; for he devoted several hours every day to the instruction of a poor youth, whose strong capacity he had the discernment to perceive, and the generous temper to aid. MENDELSSOHN was soon enabled to read Locke in a Latin version; but with such extreme pain, that, compelled to search for every word, and to arrange their Latin order, and at the same time to combine metaphysical ideas, it was observed that he did not so much translate, as guess by the force of meditation.

This prodigious effort of his intellect retarded his progress, but invigorated his habit, as the racer, by running against the hill, at length courses with facility.

A succeeding effort was to master the living languages, and chiefly the English, that he might read his favourite Locke in his own idiom. Thus a great genius for metaphysics and languages was forming itself alone, without aid.

It is curious to detect, in the character of genius, the effects of local and moral influences. There resulted from MENDELSSOHN's early situation, certain defects in his Jewish education, and numerous impediments in his studies. Inheriting but one language, too obsolete and naked to serve the purposes of modern philosophy, he perhaps overvalued his new acquisitions, and in his delight of knowing many languages, he with difficulty escaped from remaining a mere philologist; while in his philosophy, having adopted the prevailing principles of Wolf and Baumgarten, his genius was long without the courage or the skill to emancipate itself from their rusty chains. It was more than a step which had brought him into their circle, but a step was yet wanting to escape from it.

At length the mind of MENDELSSOHN enlarged in literary intercourse: he became a great and original thinker in many beautiful speculations in moral and critical philosophy; while he had gradually been creating a style which the critics of Germany have declared to be their first luminous model of precision and elegance. Thus a Hebrew vagrant, first perplexed in the voluminous labyrinth of Judaical learning, in his middle age oppressed by indigence and malady, and in his mature life wrestling with that commercial station whence he derived his humble independence, became one of the master-writers in the literature of his country. The history of the mind of MENDELSSOHN is one of the noblest pictures of the self-education of genius.

Friends, whose prudential counsels in the business of life are valuable in our youth, are usually prejudicial in the youth of genius. The multitude of authors and artists originates in the ignorant admiration of their early friends; while the real genius has often been disconcerted and thrown into despair, by the false judgments of his domestic circle. The productions of taste are more unfortunate than those which depend on a chain of reasoning, or the detail of facts; these are more palpable to the common judgments of men; but taste is of such rarity, that a long life may be passed by some without once obtaining a familiar acquaintance with a mind so cultivated by knowledge, so tried by experience, and so practised by converse with the literary world, that its prophetic feeling can anticipate the public opinion. When a young writer's first essay is shown, some, through

mere inability of censure, see nothing but beauties; others, from mere imbecility, can see none; and others, out of pure malice, see nothing but faults. "I was soon disgusted," says GIBBON, "with the modest practice of reading the manuscript to my friends. Of such friends some will praise for politeness, and some will criticise for vanity." Had several of our first writers set their fortunes on the cast of their friends' opinions, we might have lost some precious compositions. The friends of THOMSON discovered nothing but faults in his early productions, one of which happened to be his noblest, the "Winter;" they just could discern that these abounded with luxuriances, without being aware that they were the luxuriances of a poet. He had created a new school in art—and appealed from his circle to the public. From a manuscript letter of our poet's, written when employed on his "Summer," I transcribe his sentiments on his former literary friends in Scotland —he is writing to Mallet: "Far from defending these two lines, I damn them to the lowest depth of the poetical Tophet, prepared of old, for Mitchell, Morrice, Rook, Cook, Beckingham, and a long &c. Wherever I have evidence, or think I have evidence, which is the same thing, I'll be as obstinate as all the mules in Persia." This poet of warm affections felt so irritably the perverse criticisms of his learned friends, that they were to share alike, a poetic Hell—probably a sort of Dunciad, or Lampoons. One of these "blasts" broke out in a vindictive epigram on Mitchell, whom he describes with a "blasted eye;" but this critic literally having one, the poet, to avoid a personal reflection, could only consent to make the blemish more active—

> "Why all not faults, injurious Mitchell! why
> Appears one beauty to thy *blasting* eye?"

He again calls him "the planet-blasted Mitchell." Of another of these critical friends he speaks with more sedateness, but with a strong conviction that the critic, a very sensible man, had no sympathy with the poet. "Aikman's reflections on my writings are very good, but he does not in them regard the turn of my genius enough; should I alter my way, I would write poorly. I must choose what appears to me the most significant epithet, or I cannot, with any heart, proceed." The "Mirror," when periodically published in Edinburgh, was "fastidiously" received, as all "home-productions" are; but London avenged the cause of the author. When SWIFT introduced PARNELL to Lord Bolingbroke, and to the world, he observes, in his Journal, "it is pleasant to see one who hardly passed for anything in Ireland, make his way here with a little friendly forwarding." MONTAIGNE has honestly told us, that in his own province, they considered that for him to attempt to become an author was perfectly ludicrous: at home, says he, "I am compelled to purchase printers; while at a distance, printers purchase me." There is nothing more trying to the judgment of the friends of a young man of genius, than the invention of a new manner: without a standard to appeal to, without bladders to swim, the ordinary critic sinks into irretrievable distress; but usually pronounces against novelty. When REYNOLDS returned from Italy, warm with all the excellence of his art, and painted a portrait, his old master Hudson viewing it, and perceiving no trace of his own manner, exclaimed that he did not paint so well as when he left England; while another, who conceived no higher excellence than Kneller, treated with signal contempt the future Raphael of England.

If it be dangerous for a young writer to resign himself to the opinions of his friends, he also incurs some peril in passing them with inattention. He wants a Quintilian. One mode to obtain such an invaluable critic, is the cultivation of his own judgment in a round of reading and meditation. Let him at once supply the marble and be himself the sculptor: let the great authors of the world be his gospels, and the best critics their expounders; from the one he will draw inspiration, and from the others he will supply those tardy discoveries in art, which he who solely depends on his own experience may obtain too late. Those who do not read criticism will rarely merit to be criticised; their progress is like those who travel without a map of the country. The more extensive an author's knowledge of what has been done, the greater will be his powers in knowing what to do. To obtain originality, and effect discovery, sometimes requires but a single step, if we only know from what point to set forwards. This important event in the life of genius has too often depended on chance and good fortune, and many have gone down to their graves without having discovered their unsuspected talent. CURRAN'S predominant faculty was an exuberance of imagination when excited by passion; but when young he gave no evidence of this peculiar faculty, nor for several years, while a candidate for public distinction, was he aware of his particular powers; so slowly his imagination had developed itself. It was, when assured of the secret of his strength, that his confidence, his ambition, and his industry were excited.

Let the youth preserve his juvenile compositions, whatever these may be; they are the spontaneous growth, and like the plants of the Alps not always found in other soils; they are his virgin fancies. By contemplating them he may detect some of his predominant habits,—resume a former manner

more happily,—invent novelty from an old subject he had rudely designed,—and often may steal from himself some inventive touches, which, thrown into his most finished compositions, may seem a happiness rather than an art. It was in contemplating on some of their earliest and unfinished productions, that more than one artist discovered with WEST, that "there were inventive touches of art in his first and juvenile essay, which, with all his subsequent knowledge and experience, he had not been able to surpass." A young writer in the progress of his studies, should often recollect a fanciful simile of Dryden:

> "As those who unripe veins in mines explore,
> On the rich bed again the warm turf lay,
> Till time digests the yet imperfect ore;
> And know it will be gold another day."

The youth of genius is that "age of admiration" as sings the poet of "Human Life," when the spell breathed into our ear by our genius, fortunate or unfortunate, is—"Aspire!" Then we adore art, and the artists. It was RICHARDSON'S enthusiasm which gave REYNOLDS the raptures he caught in meditating on the description of a great painter; and REYNOLDS thought RAPHAEL the most extraordinary man the world had ever produced. WEST, when a youth, exclaimed, that "A painter is a companion for kings and emperors!" This was the feeling which rendered the thoughts of obscurity painful and insupportable to their young minds.

But this sunshine of rapture is not always spread over the spring of the youthful year. There is a season of self-contest, a period of tremors, and doubts, and darkness. These frequent returns of melancholy, sometimes of despondence, which is the lot of inexperienced genius, is a secret history of the heart, which has been finely conveyed to us by Petrarch, in a conversation with John of Florence, to whom the young poet often resorted when dejected, to reanimate his failing powers, to confess his faults, and to confide to him his dark and wavering resolves. It was a question with Petrarch, whether he should not turn away from the pursuit of literary fame, by giving another direction to his life.

"I went one day to John of Florence in one of those ague-fits of faint-heartedness which often happened to me: he received me with his accustomed kindness. 'What ails you?' said he, 'you seem oppressed with thought: if I am not deceived, something has happened to you.'—'You do not deceive yourself, my father (for thus I used to call him), and yet nothing newly has happened to me; but I come to confide to you that my old melancholy torments me more than usual. You know its nature, for my heart has always been opened to you; you know all which I have done to draw myself out of the crowd, and to acquire a name; and surely not without some success, since I have your testimony in my favour. Are you not the truest man, and the best of critics, who have never ceased to bestow on me your praise,—and what need I more? Have you not often told me that I am answerable to God for the talents he has endowed me with, if I neglected to cultivate them? Your praises were to me as a sharp spur: I applied myself to study with more ardour, insatiable even of my moments. Disdaining the beaten paths, I opened a new road; and I flattered myself that assiduous labour would lead to something great; but I know not how, when I thought myself highest, I feel myself fallen; the spring of my mind has dried up; what seemed easy once, now appears to me above my strength; I stumble at every step, and am ready to sink for ever into despair. I return to you to teach me, or at least advise me. Shall I for ever quit my studies? Shall I strike into some new course of life? My father, have pity on me! draw me out of the frightful state in which I am lost.' I could proceed no farther without shedding tears. 'Cease to afflict yourself, my son,' said that good man; 'your condition is not so bad as you think: the truth is, you knew little at the time you imagined you knew much. The discovery of your ignorance is the first great step you have made towards true knowledge. The veil is lifted up, and you now view those deep shades of the soul which were concealed from you by excessive presumption. In ascending an elevated spot, we gradually discover many things whose existence before was not suspected by us. Persevere in the career which you entered with my advice; feel confident that God will not abandon you: there are maladies which the patient does not perceive; but to be aware of the disease, is the first step towards the cure.'"

This remarkable literary interview is here given, that it may perchance meet the eye of some kindred youth at one of those lonely moments when a Shakespeare may have thought himself no poet, and a Raphael believed himself no painter. Then may the tender wisdom of a John of Florence, in the cloudy despondency of art, lighten up the vision of its glory!

INGENUOUS YOUTH! if, in a constant perusal of the master-writers, you see your own sentiments anticipated, if in the tumult of your mind, as it comes in contact with theirs, new sentiments arise; if, sometimes, looking on the public favourite of the hour, you feel that within which prompts you to imagine that you could rival or surpass him; if, in meditating on the confessions of every man of genius, for they all have their

confessions, you find you have experienced the same sensations from the same circumstances, encountered the same difficulties and overcome them by the same means,—then let not your courage be lost in your admiration,—but listen to that "still small voice" in your heart which cries with CORREGGIO and with MONTESQUIEU, "Ed io anche son pittore!"

CHAPTER VII.

Of the irritability of genius.—Genius in society often in a state of suffering.—Equality of temper more prevalent among men of letters.—Of the occupation of making a great name.—Anxieties of the most successful.—Of the inventors.—Writers of learning.—Writers of taste.—Artists.

THE modes of life of a man of genius, often tinctured by eccentricity and enthusiasm, maintain an eternal conflict with the monotonous and imitative habits of society, as society is carried on in a great metropolis, where men are necessarily alike, and where, in perpetual intercourse, they shape themselves to one another.

The occupations, the amusements, and the ardour of the man of genius, are at discord with the artificial habits of life: in the vortexes of business, or the world of pleasure, crowds of human beings are only treading in one another's steps. The pleasures and the sorrows of this active multitude are not his, while his are not obvious to them; and his favourite occupations strengthen his peculiarities, and increase his sensibility. Genius in society is often in a state of suffering. Professional characters, who are themselves so often literary, yielding to their predominant interests, conform to that assumed urbanity which levels them with ordinary minds; but the man of genius cannot leave himself behind in the cabinet he quits; the train of his thoughts is not stopped at will, and in the range of conversation the habits of his mind will prevail: the poet will sometimes muse till he modulates a verse; the artist is sketching what a moment presents, and a moment changes; the philosophical historian is suddenly absorbed by a new combination of thought, and, placing his hands over his eyes, is thrown back into the middle ages. Thus it happens that an excited imagination, a high-toned feeling, a wandering reverie, a restlessness of temper, are perpetually carrying the man of genius out of the processional line of the mere conversationists. Like all solitary beings, he is much too sentient, and prepares for defence even at a random touch or a chance hit. His generalising views take things only in masses, while in his rapid emotions he interrogates, and doubts, and is caustic; in a word, he thinks he converses, while he is at his studies. Sometimes, apparently a complacent listener, we are mortified by detecting the absent man: now he appears humbled and spiritless, ruminating over some failure which probably may be only known to himself; and now haughty and hardy for a triumph he has obtained, which yet remains a secret to the world. No man is so apt to indulge the extremes of the most opposite feelings: he is sometimes insolent, and sometimes querulous; now the soul of tenderness and tranquillity, view him stung by jealousy, or writhing in aversion! A fever shakes his spirit; a fever which has sometimes generated a disease, and has even produced a slight perturbation of the faculties*. In one of those manuscript notes by Lord BYRON on this work, which I have wished to preserve, I find his lordship observing on the feelings of genius, that "the depreciation of the lowest of mankind is more painful than the applause of the highest is pleasing." Such is the confession of genius, and such its liability to hourly pain.

Once we were nearly receiving from the hand of genius the most curious sketches of the temper, the irascible humours, the delicacy of soul, even to its shadowiness, from the warm *sbozzos* of BURNS, when he began a diary of the heart,—a narrative of characters and events, and a chronology of his emotions. It was natural for such a creature of sensation and passion to project such a regular task, but quite impossible for him to get through it. The paper-book that he conceived would have recorded all these things, turns out, therefore, but a very imperfect document. Imperfect as it was, it has been thought proper not to give it entire. Yet there we view a warm original mind, when he first stepped into the polished circles of society, discovering that he could no longer "pour out his bosom, his every thought and floating fancy, his very inmost soul, with

* I have given a history of *literary quarrels from personal motives*, in Quarrels of Authors, page 312. There we find how many controversies, in which the public get involved, have sprung from some sudden squabble, some neglect of petty civility, some unlucky epithet, or some casual observation dropped without much consideration, which mortified or enraged the *genus irritabile*; a title which from ancient days has been assigned to every description of authors. The late Dr. WELLS, who had some experience in his intercourse with many literary characters, observed, that "in whatever regards the fruits of their mental labours, this is universally acknowledged to be true. Some of the malevolent passions indeed frequently become in learned men more than ordinarily strong, from want of that restraint upon their excitement which society imposes." A puerile critic has reproached me for having drawn my description entirely from my own fancy:—I have taken it from life! See further symptoms of this disease at the close of the chapter on *Self-praise* in the present work.

unreserved confidence to another, without hazard of losing part of that respect which man deserves from man; or, from the unavoidable imperfections attending human nature, of one day repenting his confidence." This was the first lesson he learned at Edinburgh, and it was as a substitute for such a human being that he bought a paper-book to keep under lock and key: "a security at least equal," says he, "to the bosom of any friend whatever." Let the man of genius pause over the fragments of this "paper-book;" it will instruct as much as any open confession of a criminal at the moment he is about to suffer. No man was more afflicted with that miserable pride, the infirmity of men of imagination, which is so jealously alive, even among their best friends, as to exact a perpetual acknowledgment of their powers. Our poet, with all his gratitude and veneration for "the noble Glencairn," was "wounded to the soul" because his lordship showed "so much attention, engrossing attention, to the only blockhead at table; the whole company consisted of his lordship, Dunderpate, and myself." This Dunderpate, who dined with Lord Glencairn, might have been a useful citizen, who, in some points, is of more value than an irritable bard. Burns was equally offended with another patron, who was also a literary brother, Dr. Blair. At the moment, he too appeared to be neglecting the irritable poet "for the mere carcass of greatness, or when his eye measured the difference of their point of elevation; I say to myself, with scarcely any emotion," (he might have added, except a good deal of painful contempt,) "what do I care for him or his pomp either?"—"Dr. Blair's vanity is proverbially known among his acquaintance," adds Burns, at the moment that the solitary haughtiness of his own genius had entirely escaped his self-observation.

This character of genius is not singular. Grimm tells of MARIVAUX, that though a good man, there was something dark and suspicious in his character, which made it difficult to keep on terms with him; the most innocent word would wound him, and he was always inclined to think that there was an intention to mortify him; this disposition made him unhappy, and rendered his acquaintance too painful to endure.

What a moral paradox, but what an unquestionable fact, is the wayward irritability of some of the finest geniuses, which is often weak to effeminacy, and capricious to childishness! while minds of a less delicate texture are not frayed and fretted by casual frictions; and plain sense with a coarser grain, is sufficient to keep down these aberrations of their feelings. How mortifying is the list of—

"Fears of the brave and follies of the wise!"

Many have been sore and implacable on an allusion to some personal defect—on the obscurity of their birth—on some peculiarity of habit; and have suffered themselves to be governed in life by nervous whims and chimeras, equally fantastic and trivial. This morbid sensibility lurks in the temperament of genius, and the infection is often discovered where it is not always suspected. Cumberland declared that the sensibility of some men of genius is so quick and captious, that you must first consider whom they can be happy with, before you can promise yourself any happiness with them: if you bring uncongenial humours into contact with each other, all the objects of society will be frustrated by inattention to the proper grouping of the guests. Look round on our contemporaries; every day furnishes facts which confirm our principle. Among the vexations of POPE was the libel of "the pictured shape;" and even the robust mind of JOHNSON could not suffer to be exhibited as "blinking Sam." MILTON must have delighted in contemplating his own person; and the engraver not having reached our sublime bard's ideal grace, he has pointed his indignation in four iambics. The praise of a skipping ape raised the feeling of envy in that child of nature and genius, GOLDSMITH. VOITURE, the son of a vintner, like our PRIOR, was so mortified whenever remined of his original occupation, that it was bitterly said, that wine, which cheered the hearts of all men, sickened the heart of Voiture. AKENSIDE ever considered his lameness as an unsupportable misfortune, for it continually reminded him of the fall of the cleaver from one of his father's blocks. BECCARIA, invited to Paris by the literati, arrived melancholy and silent—and abruptly returned home. At that moment this great man was most miserable from a fit of jealousy: a young female had extinguished all his philosophy. The poet ROUSSEAU was the son of a cobbler; and when his honest parent waited at the door of the theatre to embrace his son on the success of his first piece, genius, whose sensibility is not always virtuous, repulsed the venerable father with insult and contempt. But I will no longer proceed from folly to crime!

Those who give so many sensations to others must themselves possess an excess and a variety of feelings. We find, indeed, that they are censured for their extreme irritability; and that happy equality of temper so prevalent among MEN OF LETTERS, and which is conveniently acquired by men of the world, has been usually refused to great mental powers, or to fervid dispositions—authors and artists. The man of wit becomes petulant, the profound thinker morose, and the vivacious ridiculously thoughtless.

When ROUSSEAU once retired to a village, he had to learn to endure its conversation; for this

purpose he was compelled to invent an expedient to get rid of his uneasy sensations. "Alone, I have never known ennui, even when perfectly unoccupied; my imagination, filling the void, was sufficient to busy me. It is only the inactive chit-chat of the room, when every one is seated face to face, and only moving their tongues, which I never could support. There to be a fixture, nailed with one hand on the other, to settle the state of the weather, or watch the flies about one, or, what is worse, to be bandying compliments, this to me is not bearable." He hit on the expedient of making lace-strings, carrying his working cushion in his visits, to keep the peace with the country gossips.

Is the occupation of making a great name less anxious and precarious than that of making a great fortune? the progress of a man's capital is unequivocal to him, but that of the fame of authors and artists is for the greater part of their lives of an ambiguous nature. They become whatever the minds or knowledge of others make them; they are the creatures of the prejudices and the predispositions of others, and must suffer from those precipitate judgments which are the result of such prejudices and such predispositions. Time only is the certain friend of literary worth, for time makes the world disagree among themselves; and when those who condemn discover that there are others who approve, the weaker party loses itself in the stronger, and at length they learn, that the author was far more reasonable than their prejudices had allowed them to conceive. It is thus, however, that the regard which men of genius find in one place they lose in another. We may often smile at the local gradations of genius; the fervid esteem in which an author is held here, and the cold indifference, if not contempt, he encounters in another place; here the man of learning is condemned as a heavy drone, and there the man of wit annoys the unwitty listener.

And are not the anxieties of even the most successful men of genius renewed at every work—often quitted in despair, often returned to with rapture? the same agitation of the spirits, the same poignant delight, the same weariness, the same dissatisfaction, the same querulous languishment after excellence? Is the man of genius an INVENTOR? the discovery is contested, or it is not comprehended for ten years after, perhaps not during his whole life; even men of science are as children before him. Sir Thomas Bodley wrote to Lord Bacon, remonstrating with him on his *new mode of philosophising*. It seems the fate of all originality of thinking to be immediately opposed; a contemporary is not prepared for its comprehension, and too often cautiously avoids it, from the prudential motive which turns away from a new and solitary path. BACON was not at all understood at home in his own day; his reputation—for it was not celebrity—was confined to his history of Henry VII., and his Essays; it was long after his death before English writers ventured to quote Bacon as an authority; and with equal simplicity and grandeur, BACON called himself "the servant of posterity." MONTESQUIEU gave his *Esprit des Loix* to be read by that man in France, whom he conceived to be the best judge, and in return received the most mortifying remarks. The great philosopher exclaimed in despair, "I see my own age is not ripe enough to understand my work; however, it shall be published!" When KEPLER published the first rational work on comets, it was condemned, even by the learned, as a wild dream. COPERNICUS so much dreaded the prejudice of mankind against his treatise on "The Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies," that, by a species of continence of all others most difficult to a philosopher, says Adam Smith, he detained it in his closet for thirty years together. LINNÆUS once in despair abandoned his beloved studies, from a too irritable feeling of the ridicule in which, as it appeared to him, a professor Siegesbeck had involved his famous system. Penury, neglect, and labour, LINNÆUS could endure, but that his botany should become the object of ridicule for all Stockholm, shook the nerves of this great inventor in his science. Let him speak for himself. "No one cared how many sleepless nights and toilsome hours I had passed, while all with one voice declared, that Siegesbeck had annihilated me. I took my leave of Flora, who bestows nothing on me but Siegesbecks; and condemned my too numerous observations a thousand times over to eternal oblivion. What a fool have I been to waste so much time, to spend my days in a study which yields no better fruit, and makes me the laughing-stock of the world." Such are the cries of the irritability of genius, and such are often the causes. The world was in danger of losing a new science, had not LINNÆUS returned to the discoveries which he had forsaken in the madness of the mind! The great SYDENHAM, who like our HARVEY and our HUNTER, effected a revolution in the science of medicine, and led on alone by the independence of his genius attacked the most prevailing prejudices, so highly provoked the malignant emulation of his rivals, that a conspiracy was raised against the father of our modern practice to banish him out of the college, as "guilty of medical heresy." JOHN HUNTER was a great discoverer in his own science; but one who well knew him has told us, that few of his contemporaries perceived the ultimate object of his pursuits; and his strong and solitary genius laboured to perfect his designs without the solace of sym-

pathy, without one cheering approbation. "We bees do not provide honey for ourselves," exclaimed VAN HELMONT, when worn out by the toils of chemistry, and still contemplating, amidst tribulation and persecution, and approaching death, his "Tree of Life," which he imagined he had discovered in the cedar. But with a sublime melancholy, his spirit breaks out: "My mind breathes some unheard-of thing within; though I, as unprofitable for this life, shall be buried!" Such were the mighty but indistinct anticipations of this visionary inventor, the father of modern chemistry!

I cannot quit this short record of the fates of the inventors in science, without adverting to another cause of that irritability of genius which is so closely connected with their pursuits. If we look into the history of theories, we shall be surprised at the vast number which have "not left a rack behind." And do we suppose that the inventors themselves were not at times alarmed by secret doubts of their soundness and stability? They felt, too often for their repose, that the noble architecture which they had raised might be built on moveable sands, and be found only in the dust of libraries; a cloudy day, or a fit of indigestion, would deprive an inventor of his theory all at once; and as one of them said, "after dinner, all that I have written in the morning appears to me dark, incongruous, nonsensical." At such moments we should find this man of genius in no pleasant mood. The true cause of this nervous state cannot, nay, must not, be confided to the world: the honour of his darling theory will always be dearer to his pride than the confession of even slight doubts which may shake its truth. It is a curious fact which we have but recently discovered, that ROUSSEAU was disturbed by a terror he experienced, and which we well know was not unfounded, that his theories of education were false and absurd. He could not endure to read a page in his own Emile * without disgust after the work had been published! He acknowledged that there were more suffrages against his notions than for them. "I am not displeased," says he, "with myself on the style and eloquence, but I still dread that my writings are good for nothing at the bottom, and that all my theories are full of extravagance.—*Je crains toujours que je pèche par le fond, et que tous mes systèmes ne sont que des extravagances.*" HARTLEY with his "Vibrations and vibratiuncules," LEIBNITZ with his "Monads," CUDWORTH with his "Plastic Natures," MALEBRANCHE with his paradoxical doctrine of "Seeing all things in God," and BURNET with his heretical "Theory of the Earth," must unquestionably at times have betrayed an irritability which those about them may have attributed to temper, rather than to genius.

Is our man of genius—not the victim of fancy, but the slave of truth—a learned author? Of the living waters of human knowledge it cannot be said that "If a man drink thereof, he shall never thirst again." What volumes remain to open! what manuscript but makes his heart palpitate! There is no term in researches which new facts may not alter, and a single date may not dissolve. Truth! thou fascinating, but severe mistress, thy adorers are often broken down in thy servitude, performing a thousand unregarded task-works! Now winding thee through thy labyrinth with a single thread, often unravelling—now feeling their way in darkness, doubtful if it be thyself they are touching. How much of the real labour of genius and erudition must remain concealed from the world, and never be reached by their penetration! MONTESQUIEU has described this feeling after its agony: "I thought I should have killed myself these three months to finish a *morceau* (for his great work), which I wished to insert, on the origin and revolutions of the civil laws in France. You will read it in three hours; but I do assure you that it cost me so much labour that it has whitened my hair." Mr. Hallam, stopping to admire the genius of GIBBON, exclaims, "In this, as in many other places, the masterly boldness and precision of his outline, which astonish those who have trodden parts of the same field, is apt to escape an uninformed reader." Thrice has my learned friend, SHARON TURNER, recomposed, with renewed researches, the history of our ancestors, of which Milton and Hume had despaired—thrice, amidst the self-contests of ill-health and professional duties!

The man of erudition in closing his elaborate work is still exposed to the fatal omissions of wearied vigilance, or the accidental knowledge of some inferior mind, and always to the reigning taste, whatever it chance to be, of the public. BURNET criticised VARILLAS unsparingly; but when he wrote history himself, Harmer's "Specimen of Errors in Burnet's History," returned Burnet the pangs which he had inflicted on another. NEWTON'S favourite work was his "Chronology," which he had written over fifteen times, yet he desisted from its publication during his life-time, from the ill-usage of which he complained. Even the "Optics" of Newton had no character at home till noticed in France. The calm temper of our great philosopher was of so fearful a nature in regard to criticism, that Whiston declares that he would not publish his attack on the Chronology, lest it might have

* In a letter by Hume to Blair, written in 1766, apparently first published in the Literary Gazette, Nov. 17, 1821.

killed our philosopher; and thus Bishop STILLINGFLEET's end was hastened by LOCKE's confutation of his metaphysics. The feelings of Sir JOHN MARSHAM could hardly be less irritable when he found his great work tainted by an accusation that it was not friendly to revelation. When the learned POCOCK published a specimen of his translation of Abulpharagius, an Arabian historian, in 1649, it excited great interest; but in 1663, when he gave the world the complete version, it met with no encouragement: in the course of those thirteen years, the genius of the times had changed, and Oriental studies were no longer in request.

The great VERULAM profoundly felt the retardment of his fame; for he has pathetically expressed this sentiment in his testament, where he bequeaths his name to posterity, AFTER SOME GENERATIONS SHALL BE PAST. BRUCE sunk into his grave defrauded of that just fame which his pride and vivacity perhaps too keenly prized, at least for his happiness, and which he authoritatively exacted from an unwilling public. Mortified and indignant at the reception of his great labour by the cold-hearted scepticism of little minds, and the maliciousness of idling wits, he whose fortitude had toiled through a life of difficulty and danger, could not endure the laugh and scorn of public opinion; for BRUCE there was a simoon more dreadful than the Arabian, and from which genius cannot hide its head. Yet BRUCE only met with the fate which MARCO POLO had before encountered; whose faithful narrative had been contemned by his contemporaries, and who was long thrown aside among legendary writers.

HARVEY, though his life was prolonged to his eightieth year, hardly lived to see his great discovery of the circulation of the blood established: no physician adopted it; and when at length it was received, one party attempted to rob Harvey of the honour of the discovery, while another asserted that it was so obvious, that they could only express their astonishment that it had ever escaped observation. Incredulity and envy are the evil spirits which have often dogged great inventors to their tomb, and there only have vanished.—But I seem writing the "calamities of authors," and have only begun the catalogue.

The reputation of a writer of taste is subject to more difficulties than any other. Similar was the fate of the finest ode-writers in our poetry. On their publication, the odes of COLLINS could find no readers; and those of GRAY, though ushered into the reading world by the fashionable press of Walpole, were condemned as failures. When RACINE produced his "Athalie," it was not at all relished: Boileau indeed declared that he understood these matters better than the public, and prophesied that the public would return to it: they did so; but it was sixty years afterwards; and Racine died without suspecting that "Athalie" was his masterpiece. I have heard one of our great poets regret that he had devoted so much of his life to the cultivation of his art, which arose from a project made in the golden vision of his youth: "at a time," said he, "when I thought that the fountain could never be dried up."—"Your baggage will reach posterity," was observed.—"There is much to spare," was the answer.

Every day we may observe, of a work of genius, that those parts which have all the raciness of the soil, and as such are most liked by its admirers, are those which are the most criticised. Modest critics shelter themselves under that general amnesty too freely granted, that tastes are allowed to differ; but we should approximate much nearer to the truth, if we were to say, that but few of mankind are prepared to relish the beautiful with that enlarged taste which comprehends all the forms of feeling which genius may assume; forms which may be necessarily associated with defects. A man of genius composes in a state of intellectual emotion, and the magic of his style consists in the movements of his soul; but the art of conveying those movements is far separated from the feeling which inspires them. The idea in the mind is not always found under the pen, any more than the artist's conception can always breathe in his pencil. Like FIAMINGO's image, which he kept polishing till his friend exclaimed, "What perfection would you have?"—"Alas!" exclaimed the sculptor, "the original I am labouring to come up to is in my head, but not yet in my hand."

The writer toils, and repeatedly toils, to throw into our minds that sympathy with which we hang over the illusion of his pages, and become himself. ARIOSTO wrote sixteen different ways the celebrated stanza descriptive of a tempest, as appears by his MSS. at Ferrara; and the version he preferred was the last of the sixteen. We know that PETRARCH made forty-four alterations of a single verse: "whether for the thought, the expression, or the harmony, it is evident that as many operations in the heart, the head, or the ear of the poet occurred," observes a man of genius, Ugo Foscolo. Quintilian and Horace dread the over-fondness of an author for his compositions: alteration is not always improvement. A picture over-finished fails in its effect. If the hand of the artist cannot leave it, how much beauty may it undo! yet still he is lingering, still strengthening the weak, still subduing the daring, still searching for that single idea which awakens so many in the minds of others, while often, as it once happened, the dash

of despair hangs the foam on the horse's nostrils. I have known a great sculptor, who for twenty years delighted himself with forming in his mind the nymph his hand was always creating. How rapturously he beheld her! what inspiration! what illusion! Alas! the last five years spoiled the beautiful which he had once reached, and could not stop and finish!

The art of composition, indeed, is of such slow attainment, that a man of genius, late in life, may discover how its secret conceals itself in the habit; how discipline consists in exercise, how perfection comes from experience, and how unity is the last effort of judgment. When Fox meditated on a history which should last with the language, he met his evil genius in this new province. The rapidity and the fire of his elocution were extinguished by a pen unconsecrated by long and previous study; he saw that he could not class with the great historians of every great people; he complained, while he mourned over the fragment of genius which, after such zealous preparation, he dared not complete. CURRAN, an orator of vehement eloquence, often strikingly original, when late in life he was desirous of cultivating literary composition, unaccustomed to its more gradual march, found a pen cold, and destitute of every grace. ROUSSEAU has glowingly described the ceaseless inquietude by which he obtained the seductive eloquence of his style; and has said, that with whatever talent a man may be born, the art of writing is not easily obtained. The existing manuscripts of ROUSSEAU display as many erasures as those of Ariosto or Petrarch; they show his eagerness to dash down his first thoughts, and the art by which he raised them to the impassioned style of his imagination. The memoir of GIBBON was composed seven or nine times, and, after all, was left unfinished; and BUFFON tells us that he wrote his *Epoques de la Nature* eighteen times before it satisfied his taste. BURNS's anxiety in finishing his poems was great; "all my poetry," says he, "is the effect of easy composition, but of laborious correction."

POPE, when employed on the Iliad, found it not only occupy his thoughts by day, but haunting his dreams by night, and once wished himself hanged, to get rid of Homer: and that he experienced often such literary agonies, witness his description of the depressions and elevations of genius:

"Who pants for glory, finds but short repose;
A breath revives him, or a breath o'erthrows!"

When ROMNEY undertook to commence the first subject for the Shakespeare Gallery, in the rapture of enthusiasm, amidst the sublime and pathetic labouring in his whole mind, arose the terror of failure. The subject chosen was "The Tempest;" and, as Hayley truly observes, it created many a tempest in the fluctuating spirits of Romney. The vehement desire of that perfection which genius conceives, and cannot always execute, held a perpetual contest with that dejection of spirits which degrades the unhappy sufferer, and casts him, grovelling among the mean of his class. In a national work a man of genius pledges his honour to the world for its performance; but to redeem that pledge, there is a darkness in the uncertain issue, and he is risking his honour for ever. By that work he will always be judged, for public failures are never forgotten, and it is not then a party, but the public itself, who become his adversaries. With ROMNEY it was "a fever of the mad;" and his friends could scarcely inspire him with sufficient courage to proceed with his arduous picture, which exercised his imagination and his pencil for several years. I have heard that he built a painting-room purposely for this picture; and never did an anchorite pour forth a more fervent orison to Heaven, than Romney when this labour was complete. He had a fine genius, with all its solitary feelings, but he was uneducated, and incompetent even to write a letter; yet on this occasion, relieved from his intense anxiety under so long a work, he wrote one of the most eloquent. It is a document in the history of genius, and reveals all those feelings which are here too faintly described*. I once heard an amiable author, whose literary career has perhaps not answered the fond hopes of his youth, half in anger and in love, declare that he would retire to some solitude, where, if any one would follow him, he would found a new order—the order of THE DISAPPOINTED.

Thus the days of a man of genius are passed in labours as unremitting and exhausting as those of the artisan. The world is not always aware, that to some, meditation, composition, and even conversation, may inflict pains undetected by the eye and the tenderness of friendship. Whenever ROUSSEAU passed a morning in society, it was observed, that in the evening he was dissatisfied and distressed; and JOHN HUNTER, in a mixed company, found that conversation fatigued, instead of amusing him. HAWKESWORTH, in the second

* "My dear friend;

"Your kindness in rejoicing so heartily at the birth of my picture, has given me great satisfaction.

"There has been an anxiety labouring in my mind the greatest part of the last twelvemonth. At times it had nearly overwhelmed me. I thought I should absolutely have sunk into despair. O! what a kind friend is, in those times! I thank God, whatever my picture may be, I can say thus much,—I am a greater philosopher, and a better Christian."

paper of the Adventurer, has drawn, from his own feelings, an eloquent comparative estimate of intellectual with corporeal labour; it may console the humble mechanic; and Plato, in his work on laws, seems to have been aware of this analogy, for he consecrates all working men or artisans to Vulcan and Minerva, because both those deities alike are hard labourers. Yet with genius all does not terminate, even with the most skilful labour. What the toiling Vulcan and the thoughtful Minerva may want, will too often be absent — the presence of the Graces. In the allegorical picture of the School of Design, by Carlo Maratti, where the students are led through their various studies, in the opening clouds above the academy are seen the Graces, hovering over their pupils, with an inscription they must often recollect,—*Sensa di noi ogni fatica è vana.*

The anxious uncertainty of an author for his compositions resembles the anxiety of a lover when he has written to a mistress who has not yet decided on his claims; he repents his labour, for he thinks he has written too much, while he is mortified at recollecting that he had omitted some things which he imagines would have secured the object of his wishes. Madame De Stael, who has often entered into feelings familiar to a literary and political family, in a parallel between ambition and genius, has distinguished them in this; that while "ambition *perseveres* in the desire of acquiring power, genius *flags* of itself. Genius in the midst of society is a pain, an internal fever which would require to be treated as a real disease, if the records of glory did not soften the sufferings it produces."—"Athenians! what troubles have you not cost me," exclaimed Demosthenes, "that I may be talked of by you!"

These moments of anxiety often darken the brightest hours of genius. Racine had extreme sensibility; the pain inflicted by a severe criticism outweighed all the applause he received. He seems to have felt, what he was often reproached with, that his Greeks, his Jews, and his Turks, were all inmates of Versailles. He had two critics, who, like our Dennis with Pope and Addison, regularly dogged his pieces as they appeared. Corneille's objections he would attribute to jealousy—at his pieces when burlesqued at the Italian theatre, he would smile outwardly, though sick at heart;—but his son informs us, that a stroke of raillery from his witty friend Chapelle, whose pleasantry hardly sheathed its bitterness, sunk more deeply into his heart than the burlesques at the Italian theatre, the protest of Corneille, and the invection of the two Dennises. More than once Moliere and Racine, in vexation of spirit, resolved to abandon their dramatic career; it was Boileau who ceaselessly animated their languor: "Posterity," he cried, "will avenge the injustice of our age!" And Congreve's comedies met with such moderate success, that it appears the author was extremely mortified, and on the ill reception of "The Way of the World," determined to write no more for the stage. When he told Voltaire, on the French wit's visit, that Voltaire must consider him as a private gentleman, and not as an author, which apparent affectation called down on Congreve the sarcastic severity of the French author, more of mortification and humility might have been in Congreve's language than of affectation or pride.

The life of Tasso abounds with pictures of a complete exhaustion of this kind. His contradictory critics had perplexed him with the most intricate literary discussions, and either occasioned or increased a mental alienation. In one of his letters, we find that he repents the composition of his great poem, for although his own taste approved of that marvellous, which still forms a noble part of its creation, yet he confesses that his cold reasoning critics have decided, that the history of his hero Godfrey required another species of conduct. "Hence," cries the unhappy bard, "doubts torment me; but for the past, and what is done, I know of no remedy;" and he longs to precipitate the publication, that "he may be delivered from misery and agony." He solemnly swears,—"did not the circumstances of my situation compel me, I would not print it, even perhaps during my life, I so much doubt of its success." Such was that painful state of fear and doubt experienced by the author of the "Jerusalem Delivered," when he gave it to the world; a state of suspense, among the children of imagination, in which none are more liable to participate than the true sensitive artist. We may now inspect the severe correction of Tasso's muse, in the fac-simile of a page of his manuscripts in Mr. Dibdin's late Tour. She seems to have inflicted tortures on his pen, surpassing even those which may be seen in the fac-simile page which, thirty years ago, I gave of Pope's Homer. At Florence may still be viewed the many works begun and abandoned by the genius of Michael Angelo; they are preserved inviolate—"so sacred is the terror of Michael Angelo's genius!" exclaims Forsyth. These works are not always to be considered as failures of the chisel; they appear rather to have been rejected for coming short of the artist's first conceptions: yet, in a strain of sublime poetry, he has preserved his sentiments on the force of intellectual labour; he thought that there was nothing which the imagination conceived, that could not be made

visible in marble, if the hand were made to obey the mind:—

Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto,
Ch' un marmo solo in se non circoscriva
Col suo soverchio, e solo a quello arriva
La man che obbedisce all' intelletto.

IMITATED.

The sculptor never yet conceived a thought
That yielding marble has refused to aid;
But never with a mastery he wrought—
Save when the hand the intellect obeyed.

An interesting domestic story has been preserved of GESSNER, who so zealously devoted his graver and his pencil to the arts. His sensibility was ever struggling after that ideal excellence which he could not attain. Often he sunk into fits of melancholy, and, gentle as he was, the tenderness of his wife and friends could not soothe his distempered feelings; it was necessary to abandon him to his own thoughts, till, after a long abstinence from his neglected works, in a lucid moment, some accident occasioned him to return to them. In one of these hypochondria of genius, after a long interval of despair, one morning at breakfast with his wife, his eye fixed on one of his pictures: it was a group of fauns with young shepherds dancing at the entrance of a cavern shaded with vines; his eye appeared at length to glisten; and a sudden return to good humour broke out in this lively apostrophe, "Ah! see those playful children, they always dance!" This was the moment of gaiety and inspiration, and he flew to his forsaken easel.

La Harpe, an author by profession, observes, that as it has been shown that there are some maladies peculiar to artisans*,—there are also some sorrows peculiar to them, and which the world can neither pity nor soften, because they do not enter into their experience. The querulous language of so many men of genius has been sometimes attributed to causes very different from the real ones,—the most fortunate live to see their talents contested and their best works decried. Assuredly many an author has sunk into his grave without the consciousness of having obtained that fame for which he had sacrificed an arduous life. The too feeling SMOLLETT has left this testimony to posterity: "Had some of those, who are pleased to call themselves my friends, been at any pains to deserve the character, and told me ingenuously what I had to expect in the capacity of an *author*, I should, in all probability, have spared myself the *incredible labour* and *chagrin* I have since undergone." And SMOLLETT was a popular writer! POPE's solemn declaration in the preface to his collected works comes by no means short of SMOLLETT's avowal. HUME's philosophical indifference could often suppress that irritability which Pope and Smollett fully indulged.

But were the feelings of HUME more obtuse, or did his temper, gentle as it was by constitution, bear, with a saintly patience, the mortifications his literary life so long endured? After recomposing two of his works, which incurred the same neglect in their altered form, he raised the most sanguine hopes of his History,—but he tells us, "miserable was my disappointment!" Although he never deigned to reply to his opponents, yet they haunted him; and an eye-witness has thus described the irritated author discovering in conversation his suppressed resentment—"His forcible mode of expression, the brilliant quick movements of his eyes, and the gestures of his body," these betrayed the pangs of contempt, or of aversion! HOGARTH, in a fit of the spleen, advertised that he had determined not to give the world any more original works, and intended to pass the rest of his days in painting portraits. The same advertisement is marked by farther irritability. He contemptuously offers the purchasers of his "Analysis of Beauty," to present them *gratis* with "an eighteenpenny pamphlet," published by Ramsay the painter, written in opposition to Hogarth's principles. So untameable was the irritability of this great inventor in art, that he attempts to conceal his irritation by offering to dispose gratuitously of the criticism which had disturbed his nights.

Parties confederate against a man of genius,—as happened to Corneille, to D'Avenant*, and Milton, and a Pradon and a Settle carry away the meed of a Racine and a Dryden. It was to support the drooping spirit of his friend Racine on the opposition raised against Phædra, that Boileau addressed to him an epistle "On the Utility to be drawn from the Jealousy of the Envious." The calm dignity of the historian DE THOU, amidst the passions of his times, confidently expected that justice from posterity which his own age refused to his early and his late labour. That great man was, however, compelled, by his injured

* See Ramazini, "De Morbis Artificium Diatriba," which Dr. Jaines translated in 1750. It is a sad reflection, resulting from this curious treatise, that the arts entail no small mischief upon their respective workmen; so that the means by which they live are too often the occasion of their being hurried out of the world.

* See "Quarrels of Authors," p. 244, on the confederacy of several wits against D'Avenant, a great genius; where I discovered that a volume of poems, said "to be written by the author's friends," which had hitherto been referred to as a volume of panegyrics, contains nothing but irony and satire, which had escaped the discovery of so many transcribers of title-pages, frequently miscalled literary historians.

feelings, to compose a poem under the name of another, to serve as his apology against the intolerant court of Rome, and the factious politicians of France; it was a noble subterfuge to which a great genius was forced. The acquaintances of the poet COLLINS probably complained of his wayward humours and irritability; but how could they sympathise with the secret mortification of the poet, who imagined that he had composed his Pastorals on wrong principles, or, when in the agony of his soul, he consigned to the flames with his own hands his unsold, but immortal odes? Can we forget the dignified complaint of the Rambler, with which he awfully closes his work, appealing to posterity?

Genius contracts those peculiarities, of which it is so loudly accused, in its solitary occupations; that loftiness of spirit, those quick jealousies, those excessive affections and aversions, which view everything as it passes in its own ideal world, and rarely as it exists in the mediocrity of reality. If this irritability of genius be a malady which has raged even among philosophers, we must not be surprised at the temperament of poets. These last have abandoned their country; they have changed their name; they have punished themselves with exile in the rage of their disorder. No! not poets only. DESCARTES sought in vain, even in his secreted life, for a refuge for his genius; he thought himself persecuted in France, he thought himself calumniated among strangers, and he went and died in Sweden; and little did that man of genius think that his countrymen would beg to have his ashes restored to them. Even the reasoning HUME once proposed to change his name and his country; and I believe did. The great poetical genius of our own times has openly alienated himself from the land of his brothers. He becomes immortal in the language of a people whom he would contemn*. Does he accept with ingratitude the fame he loves more than life?

Such, then, is that state of irritability in which men of genius participate, whether they be inventors, men of learning, fine writers, or artists. It is a state not friendly to equality of temper. In the various humours incidental to it, when they are often deeply affected, the cause escapes all perception of sympathy. The intellectual malady eludes even the tenderness of friendship. At those moments, the lightest injury to the feelings, which at another time would make no impression, may produce a perturbed state of feeling in the warm temper, or the corroding chagrin of a self-wounded spirit. These are moments which claim the encouragements of a friendship animated by a high esteem for the intellectual excellence of the man of genius; not the general intercourse of society; not the insensibility of the dull, nor the levity of the volatile.

Men of genius are often reverenced only where they are known by their writings; intellectual beings in the romance of life—in its history, they are men! ERASMUS compared them to the great figures in tapestry-work, which lose their effect when not seen at a distance. Their foibles and their infirmities are obvious to their associates, often only capable of discerning these qualities. The defects of great men are the consolation of the dunces.

CHAPTER VIII.

The spirit of literature and the spirit of society.—The Inventors.—Society offers seduction and not reward to men of genius.—The notions of persons of fashion of men of genius.—The habitudes of the man of genius distinct from those of the man of society.—Study, meditation, and enthusiasm, the progress of genius.—The disagreement between the men of the world and the literary character.

THE INVENTORS who inherited little or nothing from their predecessors, appear to have pursued their insulated studies in the full independence of their mind and development of their inventive faculty; they stood apart, in seclusion, the solitary lights of their age. Such were the founders of our literature; Bacon and Hobbes, Newton and Milton. Even so late as the days of Dryden, Addison, and Pope, the man of genius drew his circle round his intimates; his day was uniform, his habits unbroken; and he was never too far removed, nor too long estranged, from meditation and reverie: his works were the sources of his pleasure ere they became the labours of his pride.

But when a more uniform light of knowledge illuminates from all sides, the genius of society, made up of so many sorts of genius, becomes greater than the genius of the individual who has entirely yielded himself up to his solitary art.

* I shall preserve a manuscript note of Lord BYRON on this passage; not without a hope that we shall never receive from him the genius of Italian poetry, otherwise than in the language of his "*father land*;" an expressive term, which I adopted from the Dutch language some years past, and which I have seen since sanctioned by the pens of Lord Byron and of Mr. Southey.

His Lordship has here observed, "It is not my fault that I am obliged to write in English. If I understood my present language equally well, I would write in it; but this will require ten years at least to form a style: no tongue so easy to acquire a little of, or so difficult to master thoroughly, as Italian." On the same page I find the following note: "What was rumoured of me in that language? If true, I was unfit for England: if false, England was unfit for me:—'There is a world elsewhere.' I have never regretted for a moment that country, but often that I ever returned to it at all."

Hence the character of a man of genius becomes subordinate. A conversation age succeeds a studious one; and the family of genius, the poet, the painter, and the student, are no longer recluses. They mix with their rivals, who are jealous of equality, or with others, who, incapable of valuing them for themselves alone, rate them but as parts of an integral.

The man of genius is now trammelled with the artificial and mechanical forms of life; and in too close an intercourse with society, the loneliness and raciness of thinking is modified away in its seductive conventions. An excessive indulgence in the pleasures of social life, constitutes the great interests of a luxuriant and opulent age; but of late, while the arts of assembling in large societies have been practised, varied by all forms, and pushed on to all excesses, it may become a question whether by them our happiness is as much improved, or our individual character as well formed, as in a society not so heterogeneous and unsocial, as that crowd, termed, with the sort of modesty peculiar to our times, "a small party:" the simplicity of parade, the humility of pride, engendered by the egotism which multiplies itself in proportion to the numbers it assembles.

It may too be a question, whether the literary man and the artist are not immolating their genius to society, when, in the shadowiness of assumed talents—that counterfeiting of all shapes—they lose their real form, with the mockery of Proteus. But nets of roses catch their feet, and a path, where all the senses are flattered, is now opened to win an Epictetus from his hut. The art of multiplying the enjoyments of society is discovered in the morning lounge, the evening dinner, and the midnight coterie. In frivolous fatigues, and vigils without meditation, perish the unvalued hours which, true genius knows, are always too brief for art, and too rare to catch its inspirations. Hence so many of our contemporaries, whose card-racks are crowded, have produced only flashy fragments. Efforts, but not works; they seem to be effects without causes; and as a great author, who is not one of them, once observed to me, "They waste a barrel of gunpowder in squibs."

And yet it is seduction, and not reward, which mere fashionable society offers the man of true genius. He will be sought for with enthusiasm, but he cannot escape from his certain fate—that of becoming tiresome to his pretended admirers.

At first the idol—shortly he is changed into a victim. He forms, indeed, a figure in their little pageant, and is invited as a sort of *improvisatore*; but the esteem they concede to him is only a part of the system of politeness; and should he be dull in discovering the favourite quality of their self-love, or in participating in their volatile tastes, he will find frequent opportunities of observing, with the sage at the court of Cyprus, that "what he knows is not proper for this place; and what is proper for this place he knows not." This society takes little personal interest in the literary character. HORACE WALPOLE lets us into this secret when writing to another man of fashion, on such a man of genius as GRAY: "I agree with you most absolutely in your opinion about GRAY; he is the worst company in the world. From a melancholy turn, from living reclusely, and from a little too much dignity, he never converses easily; all his words are measured and chosen, and formed into sentences: his writings are admirable—he himself is not agreeable." This volatile being in himself personified the quintessence of that society which is called "the world," and could not endure that equality of intellect which genius exacts. He rejected Chatterton, and quarrelled with every literary man and every artist whom he first invited to familiarity—and then hated. Witness the fates of Bentley, of Muntz, of Gray, of Cole, and others. Such a mind was incapable of appreciating the literary glory on which the mighty mind of BURKE was meditating. WALPOLE knew BURKE at a critical moment of his life, and he has recorded his own feelings:—"There was a young Mr. BURKE who wrote a book in the style of Lord Bolingbroke, that was much admired. He is a sensible man, but has not *worn off his authorism yet*, and thinks there is nothing so charming as writers, and to be one: *he will know better one of these days.*" GRAY and BURKE! What mighty men must be submitted to the petrifying sneer, that indifference of selfism for great sympathies, of this volatile and heartless man of literature and rank!

"——————— That thing of silk,
Sporus, that mere white curd of ass's milk!"

The confidential confession of RACINE to his son is remarkable: "Do not think that I am sought after by the great for my dramas; Corneille composes nobler verses than mine, but no one notices him, and he only pleases by the mouth of the actors. I never allude to my works when with men of the world, but I amuse them about matters they like to hear. My talent with them consists, not in making them feel that I have any, but in showing them that they have." RACINE treated the great like the children of society; CORNEILLE would not compromise for the tribute he exacted, but he consoled himself when, at his entrance into the theatre, the audience usually rose to salute him. The great comic genius of France, who indeed was a very thoughtful and serious man, addressed a poem to the painter MIGNARD, expressing his conviction that

"the court," by which a Frenchman of the court of Louis XIV. meant the society we call "fashionable," is fatal to the perfection of art:—

"Qui se donne à la cour se dérobe à son art;
Un esprit partagé rarement se consomme,
Et les emplois de feu demandent tout l'homme."

Has not the fate in society of our reigning literary favourites been uniform? Their mayoralty hardly exceeds the year: they are pushed aside to put in their place another, who, in his turn, must descend. Such is the history of the literary character encountering the perpetual difficulty of appearing what he really is not, while he sacrifices to a few, in a certain corner of the metropolis, who have long fantastically styled themselves "the world," that more dignified celebrity which makes an author's name more familiar than his person. To one who appeared astonished at the extensive celebrity of BUFFON, the modern Pliny replied, "I have passed fifty years at my desk." HAYDN would not yield up to society more than those hours which were not devoted to study. These were indeed but few: and such were the uniformity and retiredness of his life, that "He was for a long time the only musical man in Europe who was ignorant of the celebrity of Joseph Haydn." And has not one, the most sublime of the race, sung,

——— che seggendo in piuma,
In Fama non si vien, nè sotto coltre;
Senza la qual chi sua vita consuma
Cotal vestigio in terra di se lascia
Qual fummo in aere, ed in acqua la schiuma.

"For not on downy plumes, nor under shade
Of canopy reposing, Fame is won:
Without which, whosoe'er consumes his days,
Leaveth such vestige of himself on earth
As smoke in air, or foam upon the wave *."

But men of genius, in their intercourse with persons of fashion, have a secret inducement to court that circle. They feel a perpetual want of having the reality of their talents confirmed to themselves, and they often step into society to observe in what degree they are objects of attention; for, though ever accused of vanity, the greater part of men of genius feel that their existence, as such, must depend on the opinions of others. This standard is in truth always problematical and variable; yet they cannot hope to find a more certain one among their rivals, who at all times are adroitly depreciating their brothers, and "dusking" their lustre. They discover among those cultivators of literature and the arts who have recourse to them for their pleasure, impassioned admirers, rather than unmerciful judges; judges, who have only time to acquire that degree of illumination which is just sufficient to set at ease the fears of these claimants of genius.

When literary men assemble together, what mimetic friendships, in their mutual corruption! Creatures of intrigue, they borrow other men's eyes, and act by feelings often even contrary to their own: they wear a mask on their face, and only sing a tune they have caught. Some Hierophant in their mysteries proclaims their elect whom they have to initiate, and their profane who are to stand apart under their ban. They bend to the spirit of the age, but they do not elevate the public to them; they care not for truth, but only study to produce effect, and they do nothing for fame but what obtains an instant purpose. Yet their fame is not therefore the more real, for everything connected with fashion becomes obsolete. Her ear has a great susceptibility of weariness, and her eye rolls for incessant novelty. Never was she earnest for anything. Men's minds with her became tarnished and old-fashioned as furniture. But the steams of rich dinners, the eye which sparkles with the wines of France, the luxurious night which flames with more heat and brilliancy than God has made the day, this is the world the man of coterie-celebrity has chosen; and the Epicurean, as long as his senses do not cease to act, laughs at the few who retire to the solitary midnight lamp. Posthumous fame is—a nothing! Such men live like unbelievers in a future state, and their narrow calculating spirit coldly dies in their artificial world: but true genius looks at a nobler source of its existence; it catches inspiration in its insulated studies; and to the great genius, who feels how his present is necessarily connected with his future celebrity, posthumous fame is a reality—for the sense acts upon him!

The habitudes of genius, before genius loses its freshness in this society, are the mould in which the character is cast; and these, in spite of all the disguise of the man, will make him a distinct being from the man of society. Those who have assumed the literary character, often for purposes very distinct from literary ones, imagine that their circle is the public; but in this factitious public all their interests, their opinions, and even their passions, are temporary, and the admirers with the admired pass away with their season. "It is not sufficient that we speak the same language," says a witty philosopher, "but we must learn their dialect; we must think as they think, and we must echo their opinions, as we act by imitation." Let the man of genius then dread to level himself to the mediocrity of feeling and talent required in such circles of society, lest he become one of themselves; he will soon find that to think like

* Cary's Dante, Canto xxiv.

them, will in time become to act like them. But he who in solitude adopts no transient feelings, and reflects no artificial lights, who is only himself, possesses an immense advantage: he has not attached importance to what is merely local and fugitive, but listens to interior truths, and fixes on the immutable nature of things. He is the man of every age. Malebranche has observed, that "It is not indeed thought to be charitable to disturb common opinions, because it is not truth which unites society as it exists, so much as opinion and custom:" a principle which the world would not, I think, disagree with; but which tends to render folly wisdom itself, and to make error immortal.

Ridicule is the light scourge of society, and the terror of genius. Ridicule surrounds him with her chimeras, which, like the shadowy monsters opposing Æneas, are impalpable to his strokes: but remember when the sibyl bade the hero proceed without noticing them, he found these airy nothings as harmless as they were unreal. The habits of the literary character will, however, be tried by the men and women of the world by their own standard: they have no other; the salt of ridicule gives a poignancy to their deficient comprehension and their perfect ignorance of the persons or things which are the subjects of their ingenious animadversions. The habits of the literary character seem inevitably repulsive to persons of the world. VOLTAIRE, and his companion, the scientific Madame DE CHATELET, she who introduced Newton to the French nation, lived entirely devoted to literary pursuits, and their habits were strictly literary. It happened once that this learned pair dropped unexpectedly into a fashionable circle in the *château* of a French nobleman. A Madame de Staël, the *persifleur* in office of Madame Du Deffand, has copiously narrated the whole affair. They arrived at midnight, like two famished spectres, and there was some trouble to put them to supper and bed. They are called apparitions, because they were never visible by day, only at ten at night; for the one is busied in describing great deeds, and the other in commenting on Newton. Like other apparitions, they are uneasy companions: they will neither play nor walk; they will not dissipate their mornings with the charming circle about them, nor allow the charming circle to break into their studies. Voltaire and Madame de Chatelet would have suffered the same pain in being forced to an abstinence of their regular studies, as this circle of "agréables" would have at the loss of their meals and their airings. However, the *persifleur* declares they were ciphers "en société," adding no value to the number, and to which their learned writings bear no reference.

But if this literary couple would not play, what was worse, Voltaire poured out a vehement declamation against a fashionable species of gambling, which appears to have made them all stare. But Madame de Chatelet is the more frequent victim of our *persifleur*. The learned lady would change her apartment—for it was too noisy, and it had smoke without fire,—which last was her emblem. "She is reviewing her *Principia*; an exercise she repeats every year, without which precaution they might escape from her, and get so far away that she might never find them again. I believe that her head in respect to them is a house of imprisonment rather than the place of their birth; so that she is right to watch them closely; and she prefers the fresh air of this occupation to our amusements, and persists in her invisibility till night-time. She has six or seven tables in her apartments, for she wants them of all sizes; immense ones to spread out her papers—solid ones to hold her instruments—lighter ones, &c. Yet with all this she could not escape from the accident which happened to Philip II., after passing the night in writing, when a bottle of ink fell over the despatches; but the lady did not imitate the moderation of the prince; indeed, she had not written on state affairs, and what was spoilt in her room was algebra, much more difficult to copy out." Here is a pair of portraits of a great poet and a great mathematician, whose habits were discordant with the fashionable circle in which they resided—the representation is just, for it is by one of the coterie itself.

Study, meditation, and enthusiasm,—this is the progress of genius, and these cannot be the habits of him who lingers till he can only live among polished crowds; who, if he bear about him the consciousness of genius, will still be acting under their influences. And perhaps there never was one of this class of men who had not either first entirely formed himself in solitude, or who amidst society will not be often breaking out to seek for himself. WILKES, no longer touched by the fervours of literary and patriotic glory, suffered life to melt away as a domestic voluptuary; and then it was that he observed with some surprise of the great Earl of CHATHAM, that he sacrificed every pleasure of social life, even in youth, to his great pursuit of eloquence. That ardent character studied Barrow's Sermons so often as to repeat them from memory, and could even read twice from beginning to end Bailey's Dictionary; these are little facts which belong only to great minds! The earl himself acknowledged an artifice he practised in his intercourse with society, for he said, "when he was young, he always came late into company, and left it early." VITTORIO ALFIERI, and a brother-spirit, our own noble poet, were

rarely seen amidst the brilliant circle in which they were born. The workings of their imagination were perpetually emancipating them, and one deep loneliness of feeling proudly insulated them among the unimpassioned triflers of their rank. They preserved unbroken the unity of their character, in constantly escaping from the processional *spectacle* of society*. It is no trivial observation of another noble writer, Lord SHAFTESBURY, that "it may happen that a person may be so much the worse author, for being the finer gentleman."

An extraordinary instance of this disagreement between the man of the world and the literary character, we find in a philosopher seated on a throne. The celebrated JULIAN stained the imperial purple with an author's ink; and when he resided among the Antiochians, his unalterable character shocked that volatile and luxurious race. He slighted the plaudits of their theatre, he abhorred their dances and their horse-races, he was abstinent even at a festival, and incorrupt himself, perpetually admonished the dissipated citizens of their impious abandonment of the laws of their country. The Antiochians libelled their emperor, and petulantly lampooned his beard, which the philosopher carelessly wore neither perfumed nor curled. JULIAN, scorning to inflict a sharper punishment, pointed at them his satire of "the Misopogon, or the Antiochian; the Enemy of the Beard," where, amidst irony and invective, the literary monarch bestows on himself many exquisite and characteristic touches. All that the persons of fashion alleged against the literary character, JULIAN unreservedly confesses — his undressed beard and awkwardnesses, his obstinacy, his unsociable habits, his deficient tastes, while at the same time he represents his good qualities as so many extravagancies. But, in this Cervantic pleasantry of self-reprehension, the imperial philosopher has not failed to show this light and corrupt people that the reason he could not possibly resemble them, existed in the unhappy circumstance of having been subject to too strict an education under a family tutor, who had never suffered him to swerve from the one right way, and who (additional misfortune!) had inspired him with such a silly reverence for Plato and Socrates, Aristotle and Theophrastus, that he had been induced to make them his models. "Whatever manners," says the emperor, "I may have previously contracted, whether gentle or boorish, it is impossible for me now to alter or unlearn. Habit is said to be a second nature; to oppose it is irksome, but to counteract *the study of more than thirty years* is extremely difficult, especially when it has been imbibed with so much attention."

And what if men of genius, relinquishing their habits, could do this violence to their nature, should we not lose the original for a factitious genius, and spoil one race without improving the other? If nature, and habit, that second nature which prevails even over the first, have created two beings distinctly different, what mode of existence shall ever assimilate them? Antipathies and sympathies, those still occult causes, however concealed, will break forth at an unguarded moment. Clip the wings of an eagle that he may roost among domestic fowls,—at some unforeseen moment his pinions will overshadow and terrify his tiny associates, for "the feathered king" will be still musing on the rock and the cloud.

The man of genius will be restive even in his trammelled paces. Too impatient amidst the heartless courtesies of society, and little practised in the minuter attentions, he has rarely sacrificed to the unlaughing graces of Lord Chesterfield. Plato ingeniously compares SOCRATES to the gallipots of the Athenian apothecaries: the grotesque figures of owls and apes were painted on their exterior, but they contained within precious balsams. The man of genius amidst many a circle may exclaim with THEMISTOCLES, "I cannot fiddle, but I can make a little village a great city;" and with CORNEILLE, he may be allowed to smile at his own deficiencies, and even disdain to please in certain conventional manners, asserting that "wanting all these things, he was not the less Corneille."

But with the great thinkers and students, their character is still more obdurate. ADAM SMITH could never free himself from the embarrassed manners of a recluse; he was often absent, and his grave and formal conversation made him seem distant and reserved, when in fact no man had warmer feelings for his intimates. One who knew Sir ISAAC NEWTON tells us, that "he would sometimes be silent and thoughtful, and look all the while as if he were saying his prayers." A French princess, desirous of seeing the great moralist NICOLLE, experienced an inconceivable disappointment when the moral instructor, entering with the most perplexing bow imaginable, silently sank into his chair. The interview promoted no conversation, and the retired student, whose elevated spirit might have endured martyrdom, shrunk with timidity in the unaccustomed honour of conversing with a princess and having nothing

* In a note which Lord BYRON has written in a copy of this work his lordship says, "I fear this was not the case; I have been but too much in that circle, especially in 1812-13-14."

To the expression of "one deep loneliness of feeling," his lordship has marked in the margin "True." I am gratified to confirm the theory of my ideas of the man of genius, by the practical experience of the greatest of our age.

to say. Observe Hume thrown into a most ridiculous attitude by a woman of talents and coterie celebrity. Our philosopher was called on to perform his part in one of those inventions of the hour to which the fashionable, like children in society, have sometimes resorted to attract their world by the rumour of some new extravagance. In the present, poor HUME was to represent a sultan on a sofa, sitting between two slaves, who were the prettiest and most vivacious of Parisians. Much was anticipated from this literary exhibition. The two slaves were ready at repartee, but the utter simplicity of the sultan displayed a blockishness which blunted all edge. The phlegmatic metaphysician and historian only gave a sign of life by repeating the same awkward gesture, and the same ridiculous exclamation, without end. One of the fair slaves soon discovered the unchangeable nature of the forlorn philosopher, impatiently exclaiming, "I guessed as much, never was there such a calf of a man!"—"Since this affair," adds Madame d'Epinay, "Hume is at present banished to the class of spectators." The philosopher, indeed, had formed a more correct conception of his own character than the volatile sylphs of the Parisian circle, for in writing to the Countess de Boufflers, on an invitation to Paris, he said, "I have rusted on amid books and study; have been little engaged in the active, and not much in the pleasurable, scenes of life; and am more accustomed to a select society than to general companies." If HUME made a ridiculous figure in these circles, the error did not lie on the side of that cheerful and profound philosopher.—This subject leads our inquiries to the nature of *the conversations of men of genius.*

CHAPTER IX.

Conversations of men of genius.—Their deficient agreeableness may result from qualities which conduce to their greatness.—Slow-minded men not the dullest.—The conversationists not the ablest writers.—Their true excellence in conversation consists of associations with their pursuits.

IN conversation the sublime DANTE was taciturn or satirical; BUTLER sullen or caustic; GRAY and ALFIERI seldom talked or smiled; DESCARTES, whose habits had formed him for solitude and meditation, was silent; ROUSSEAU was remarkably trite in conversation, not an idea, not a word of fancy or eloquence warmed him; ADDISON and MOLIERE in society were only observers; and DRYDEN has very honestly told us, "My conversation is slow and dull, my humour saturnine and reserved; in short, I am none of those who endeavour to break jests in company, or make repartees." POPE had lived among "the great," not only in rank but in intellect, the most delightful conversationists; but the poet felt that he could not contribute to these seductive pleasures, and at last confessed that he could amuse and instruct himself much more by another means: "As much company as I have kept, and as much as I love it, I love reading better, and would rather be employed in reading, than in the most agreeable conversation." POPE's conversation, as preserved by Spence, was sensible; and it would seem that he had never said but one witty thing in his whole life, for only one has been recorded. It was ingeniously said of VAUCANSON, that he was as much an automaton as any which he made. HOGARTH and SWIFT, who looked on the circles of society with eyes of inspiration, were absent in company; but their grossness and asperity did not prevent the one from being the greatest of comic painters, nor the other as much a creator of manners in his way. Genius, even in society, is pursuing its own operations, and it would cease to be itself were it always to act like others.

Men of genius who are habitually eloquent, who have practised conversation as an art, for some even sacrifice their higher pursuits to this perishable art of acting, have indeed excelled, and in the most opposite manner. HORNE TOOKE finely discriminates the wit in conversation of Sheridan and Curran, after having passed an evening in their company. "SHERIDAN'S wit was like steel highly polished and sharpened for display and use; CURRAN'S was a mine of virgin gold, incessantly crumbling away from its own richness." Charles Butler, whose Reminiscences of his illustrious contemporaries are derived from personal intercourse, has correctly described the familiar conversations of PITT, FOX, and BURKE: "The most intimate friends of Mr. FOX complained of his too frequent ruminating silence. Mr. PITT talked, and his talk was fascinating. Mr. BURKE'S conversation was rambling, but splendid and instructive beyond comparison." Let me add, that the finest genius of our times, is also the most delightful man; he is that rarest among the rare of human beings, whom to have known is nearly to adore; whom to have seen, to have heard, forms an era in our life; whom youth remembers with enthusiasm, and whose presence the men and women of "the world" feel like a dream from which they would not awaken. His *bonhomie* attaches our hearts to him by its simplicity; his legendary conversation makes us, for a moment, poets like himself*.

* This was written under the inspiration of a night's conversation, or rather listening to SIR WALTER SCOTT.—I cannot bring myself to erase what now, alas! has closed in the silence of a swift termination of his glorious existence.

But that deficient agreeableness in social life with which men of genius have been often reproached, may really result from the nature of those qualities which conduce to the greatness of their public character. A thinker whose mind is saturated with knowledge on a particular subject, will be apt to deliver himself authoritatively; but he will then pass for a dogmatist: should he hesitate, that he may correct an equivocal expression, or bring nearer a remote idea, he is in danger of sinking into pedantry or rising into genius. Even the fulness of knowledge has its tediousness. "It is rare," says MALEBRANCHE, "that those who meditate profoundly, can explain well the objects they have meditated on; for they hesitate when they have to speak; they are scrupulous to convey false ideas or use inaccurate terms. They do not choose to speak, like others, merely for the sake of talking." A vivid and sudden perception of truth, or a severe scrutiny after it, may elevate the voice, and burst with an irruptive heat on the subdued tone of conversation. These men are too much in earnest for the weak or the vain. Such seriousness kills their feeble animal spirits. SMEATON, a creative genius of his class, had a warmth of expression which seemed repulsive to many: it arose from an intense application of mind, which impelled him to break out hastily when anything was said that did not accord with his ideas. Persons who are obstinate till they can give up their notions with a safe conscience, are troublesome intimates. Often too the cold tardiness of decision is only the strict balancing of scepticism or candour, while obscurity as frequently may arise from the deficiency of previous knowledge in the listener. It was said that NEWTON in conversation did not seem to understand his own writings, and it was supposed that his memory had decayed. The fact, however, was not so; and Pemberton makes a curious distinction, which accounts for NEWTON *not always being ready to speak* on subjects of which he was the sole master. "Inventors seem to treasure up in their own minds what they have found out, after another manner than those do the same things that have not this inventive faculty. The former, when they have occasion to produce their knowledge, in some means are obliged immediately to investigate part of what they want. For this they are not equally fit at all times; and thus it has often happened, that such as retain things chiefly by means of a very strong memory, have appeared off-hand more expert than the discoverers themselves."

A peculiar characteristic in the conversations of men of genius, which has often injured them when the listeners were not intimately acquainted with the men, are those sports of a vacant mind, those sudden impulses to throw out paradoxical opinions, and to take unexpected views of things in some humour of the moment. These fanciful and capricious ideas are the grotesque images of a playful mind, and are at least as frequently misrepresented as they are misunderstood. But thus the cunning Philistines are enabled to triumph over the strong and gifted man, because in the hour of confidence, and in the abandonment of the mind, he had laid his head in the lap of wantonness, and taught them how he might be shorn of his strength. Dr. JOHNSON appears often to have indulged this amusement, both in good and ill humour. Even such a calm philosopher as ADAM SMITH, as well as such a child of imagination as BURNS, were remarked for this ordinary habit of men of genius; which perhaps as often originates in a gentle feeling of contempt for their auditors, as from any other cause. Many years after having written the above, I discovered two recent confessions which confirm the principle. A literary character, the late Dr. LEYDEN, acknowledged, that "in conversation I often verge so nearly on absurdity, that I know it is perfectly easy to misconceive me, as well as to misrepresent me." And Miss Edgeworth, in describing her father's conversation, observes, that "his openness went too far, almost to imprudence; exposing him not only to be misrepresented, but to be misunderstood. Those who did not know him intimately, often took literally what was either said in sport, or spoken with the intention of making a strong impression for some good purpose." CUMBERLAND, whose conversation was delightful, happily describes the species I have noticed. "Nonsense talked by men of wit and understanding in the hour of relaxation is of the very finest essence of conviviality, and a treat delicious to those who have the sense to comprehend it; but it implies a trust in the company not always to be risked." The truth is, that many, eminent for their genius, have been remarkable in society for a simplicity and playfulness almost infantine. Such was the gaiety of HUME, such the *bonhomie* of FOX; and one who had long lived in a circle of men of genius in the last age, was disposed to consider this infantine simplicity as characteristic of genius. It is a solitary grace, which can never lend its charm to a man of the world, whose purity of mind has long been lost in a hacknied intercourse with everything exterior to himself.

But above all, what most offends, is that freedom of opinion which a man of genius can no more divest himself of, than of the features of his face. But what if this intractable obstinacy be only resistance of character? BURNS never could account to himself why, "though when he had a mind he was pretty generally beloved, he could

never get the art of commanding respect," and imagined it was owing to his deficiency in what Sterne calls "that understrapping virtue of discretion;" "I am so apt to a *lapsus linguæ*," says this honest sinner. Amidst the stupidity of a formal circle, and the inanity of triflers, however such men may conceal their impatience, one of them has forcibly described the reaction of this suppressed feeling: "The force with which it burst out when the pressure was taken off, gave the measure of the constraint which had been endured." ERASMUS, that learned and charming writer, who was blest with the genius which could enliven a folio, has well described himself, *sum naturâ propensior ad jocos quam fortasse deceat*: —more constitutionally inclined to pleasantry than, as he is pleased to add, perhaps became him. We know in his intimacy with Sir Thomas More, that Erasmus was a most exhilarating companion; yet in his intercourse with the great he was not fortunate. At the first glance he saw through affectation and parade, his praise of folly was too ironical, and his freedom carried with it no pleasantry for those who knew not to prize a laughing sage.

In conversation, the operations of the intellect with some are habitually slow, but there will be found no difference between the result of their perceptions, and those of a quicker nature; and hence it is, that slow-minded men are not, as men of the world imagine, always the dullest. NICOLLE said of a scintillant wit, "He vanquishes me in the drawing-room, but surrenders to me at discretion on the stairs." Many a great wit has thought the wit it was too late to speak, and many a great reasoner has only reasoned when his opponent has disappeared. Conversation with such men is a losing game; and it is often lamentable to observe, how men of genius are reduced to a state of helplessness from not commanding their attention, while inferior intellects habitually are found to possess what is called "a ready mind." For this reason some, as it were in despair, have shut themselves up in silence. A lively Frenchman, in describing the distinct sorts of conversation of his literary friends, among whom was Dr. FRANKLIN, energetically hits off that close observer and thinker, wary, even in society, by noting down "the silence of the celebrated FRANKLIN." We learn from Cumberland, that Lord Mansfield did not promote that conversation which gave him any pains to carry on. He resorted to society for simple relaxation, and could even find a pleasure in dulness when accompanied with placidity. "It was a kind of cushion to his understanding," observes the wit. CHAUCER, like LA FONTAINE, was more facetious in his tales than in his conversation; for the Countess of Pembroke used to rally him, observing that his silence was more agreeable to her than his talk. TASSO's conversation, which his friend Manso has attempted to preserve for us, was not agreeable. In company he sat absorbed in thought, with a melancholy air; and it was on one of these occasions, that a person present observing that this conduct was indicative of madness, that TASSO, who had heard him, looking on him without emotion, asked whether he was ever acquainted with a madman who knew to hold his tongue! Malebranche tells us that one of these mere men of learning, who can only venture to praise antiquity, once said, "I have seen DESCARTES; I knew him, and frequently have conversed with him: he was a good sort of man, and was not wanting in sense, but he had nothing extraordinary in him." Had Aristotle spoken French instead of Greek, and had this man frequently conversed with him, unquestionably he would not have discovered, even in this idol of antiquity, anything extraordinary. Two thousand years would have been wanting for our learned critic's perceptions.

It is remarkable that the conversationists have rarely proved to be the abler writers. He whose fancy is susceptible of excitement in the presence of his auditors, making the minds of men run with his own, seizing on the first impressions, and touching the shadows and outlines of things —with a memory where all lies ready at hand, quickened by habitual associations, and varying with all those extemporary changes and fugitive colours which melt away in the rainbow of conversation; with that wit, which is only wit in one place, and for a time; with that vivacity of animal spirits, which often exists separately from the more retired intellectual powers—this man can strike out wit by habit, and pour forth a stream of phrase which has sometimes been imagined to require only to be written down, to be read with the same delight with which it was heard; but he cannot print his tone, nor his air and manner, nor the contagion of his hardihood. All the while we were not sensible of the flutter of his ideas, the incoherence of his transitions, his vague notions, his doubtful assertions, and his meagre knowledge. A pen is the extinguisher of this luminary.

A curious contrast occurred between BUFFON and his friend MONTBELLIARD, who was associated in his great work. The one possessed the reverse qualities of the other: BUFFON, whose style in his composition is elaborate and declamatory, was in conversation coarse and careless. Pleading that conversation with him was only a relaxation, he rather sought than avoided the idiom and the slang of the mob, when these

seemed expressive and facetious; while MONTBELLIARD threw every charm of animation over his delightful talk: but when he took his seat at the rival desk of Buffon, an immense interval separated them; he whose tongue dropped the honey and the music of the bee, handled a pen of iron; while Buffon's was the soft pencil of the philosophical painter of nature. COWLEY and KILLEGREW furnish another instance. COWLEY was embarrassed in conversation, and had no quickness in argument or reply: a mind pensive and elegant could not be struck at to catch fire: while with KILLEGREW the sparkling bubbles of his fancy rose and dropped. When the delightful conversationist wrote, the deception ceased. Denham, who knew them both, hit off the difference between them:—

"Had Cowley ne'er spoke, Killegrew ne'er writ,
Combined in one they had made a matchless wit."

Not, however, that a man of genius does not throw out many things in conversation which have only been found admirable when the public possessed them. The public often widely differ from the individual, and a century's opinion may intervene between them. The fate of genius is sometimes that of the Athenian sculptor, who submitted his colossal Minerva to a private party for inspection. Before the artist they trembled for his daring chisel, and the man of genius smiled; behind him they calumniated, and the man of genius forgave. Once fixed in a public place, in the eyes of the whole city, the statue was the Divinity! There is a certain distance at which opinions, as well as statues, must be viewed.

But enough of those defects of men of genius which often attend their conversations. Must we then bow to authorial dignity, and kiss hands, because they are inked? Must we bend to the artist, who considers us as nothing unless we are canvas or marble under his hands? Are there not men of genius, the grace of society, and the charm of their circle? Fortunate men! more blest than their brothers; but for this, they are not the more men of genius, nor the others less. To how many of the ordinary intimates of a superior genius, who complain of his defects, might one say, "Do his productions not delight and sometimes surprise you?—You are silent! I beg your pardon; the *public* has informed you of a great name; you would not otherwise have perceived the precious talent of your neighbour: you know little of your friend but his *name*." The personal familiarity of ordinary minds with a man of genius has often produced a ludicrous prejudice. A Scotchman, to whom the name of *a* Dr. Robertson had travelled down, was curious to know who he was.—"Your neighbour!"—But he could not persuade himself that the man whom he conversed with was the great historian of his country. Even a good man could not believe in the announcement of the Messiah, from the same sort of prejudice: "Can there anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Suffer a man of genius to be such as nature and habit have formed him, and he will then be the most interesting companion; then will you see nothing but his character. AKENSIDE, in conversation with select friends, often touched by a romantic enthusiasm, would pass in review those eminent ancients whom he loved; he imbued with his poetic faculty even the details of their lives; and seemed another Plato while he poured libations to their memory in the language of Plato, among those whose studies and feelings were congenial with his own. ROMNEY, with a fancy entirely his own, would give vent to his effusions, uttered in a hurried accent and elevated tone, and often accompanied by tears, to which by constitution he was prone; thus Cumberland, from personal intimacy, describes the conversation of this man of genius. Even the temperate sensibility of HUME was touched by the bursts of feeling of ROUSSEAU; who, he says, "in conversation kindles often to a degree of heat which looks like inspiration." BARRY, that unhappy genius! was the most repulsive of men in his exterior. The vehemence of his language, the wildness of his glance, his habit of introducing vulgar oaths, which, by some unlucky association of habit, served him as expletives and interjections, communicated even a horror to some. A pious and a learned lady, who had felt intolerable uneasiness in his presence, did not however leave this man of genius that very evening without an impression that she had never heard so divine a man in her life. The conversation happening to turn on that principle of benevolence which pervades Christianity, and on the meekness of the Founder, it gave BARRY an opportunity of opening on the character of Jesus, with that copiousness of heart and mind, which once heard could never be forgotten. That artist indeed had long in his meditations an ideal head of Christ, which he was always talking of executing: "It is here!" he would cry, striking his head. That which baffled the invention, as we are told, of Leonardo da Vinci, who left his Christ headless, having exhausted his creative faculty among the apostles, this imaginative picture of the mysterious union of a divine and human nature, never ceased, even when conversing, to haunt the reveries of BARRY.

There are few authors and artists who are not eloquently instructive on that class of knowledge, or that department of art, which reveals the mastery of their life. Their conversations of this

nature affect the mind to a distant period of life. Who, having listened to such, has forgotten what a man of genius has said at such moments? Who dwells not on the single thought, or the glowing expression, stamped in the heat of the moment, which came from its source? Then the mind of genius rises as the melody of the Æolian harp, when the winds suddenly sweep over the strings—it comes and goes—and leaves a sweetness beyond the harmonies of art.

The *Miscellanea* of POLITIAN are not only the result of his studies in the rich library of Lorenzo de' Medici, but of conversations, which had passed in those rides which Lorenzo, accompanied by Politian, preferred to the pomp of cavalcades. When the Cardinal de Cabassolle strayed with PETRARCH about his valley in many a wandering discourse, they sometimes extended their walks to such a distance, that the servant sought them in vain to announce the dinner-hour, and found them returning in the evening. When HELVETIUS enjoyed the social conversation of a literary friend, he described it as "a chase of ideas." Such are the literary conversations which HORNE TOOKE alluded to, when he said "I assure you, we find more difficulty to finish than to begin our conversations."

The natural and congenial conversations of men of letters and of artists, must then be those which are associated with their pursuits, and these are of a different complexion with the talk of men of the world, the objects of which are drawn from the temporary passions of party-men, or the variable *on dits* of triflers—topics studiously rejected from these more tranquillising conversations. Diamonds can only be polished by their own dust, and are only shaped by the friction of other diamonds; and so it happens with literary men and artists.

A meeting of this nature has been recorded by CICERO, which himself and ATTICUS had with VARRO in the country. Varro arriving from Rome in their neighbourhood somewhat fatigued, had sent a messenger to his friends. "As soon as we had heard these tidings," says Cicero, "we could not delay hastening to see one, who was attached to us by the same pursuits and by former friendship." They set off, but found Varro half-way, urged by the same eager desire to join them. They conducted him to Cicero's villa. Here, while Cicero was inquiring after the news of Rome, Atticus interrupted the political rival of Cæsar, observing, "Let us leave off inquiring after things which cannot be heard without pain. Rather ask about what we know, for Varro's muses are longer silent than they used to be, yet surely he has not forsaken them, but rather conceals what he writes."—"By no means!" replied Varro, "for I deem him to be a whimsical man to write what he wishes to suppress. I have indeed a great work in hand (on the Latin language), long designed for Cicero." The conversation then took its natural turn by Atticus having got rid of the political anxiety of Cicero. Such, too, were the conversations which passed at the literary residence of the Medici family; which was described, with as much truth as fancy, as "the Lyceum of philosophy, the Arcadia of poets, and the Academy of painters." We have a pleasing instance of such a meeting of literary friends in those conversations which passed in POPE'S garden, where there was often a remarkable union of nobility and literary men. There Thomson, Mallet, Gay, Hooke, and Glover, met Cobham, Bathurst, Chesterfield, Lyttelton, and other lords; there some of these poets found patrons, and POPE himself discovered critics. The contracted views of Spence have unfortunately not preserved these literary conversations, but a curious passage has dropped from the pen of Lord BOLINGBROKE, in what his lordship calls "a letter to Pope," often probably passed over among his political tracts. It breathes the spirit of those delightful conversations. "My thoughts," writes his lordship, "in what order soever they flow, shall be communicated to you just *as they pass through my mind*; just as they used to be when *we conversed together* on these or any other subject; when *we sauntered alone*, or as we have often done with good Arbuthnot, and the jocose Dean of St. Patrick, among *the multiplied scenes of your little garden*. That theatre is large enough for my ambition." Such a scene opens a beautiful subject for a curious portrait-painter. These literary groups in the gardens of Pope, sauntering, or divided in confidential intercourse, would furnish a scene of literary repose and enjoyment, among some of the most illustrious names in our literature.

CHAPTER X.

Literary solitude.—Its necessity.—Its pleasures.—Of visitors by profession.—Its inconveniences.

THE literary character is reproached with an extreme passion for retirement, cultivating those insulating habits, which, while they are great interruptions, and even weakeners, of domestic happiness, induce at the same time in public life to a secession from its cares, and an avoidance of its active duties. Yet the vacancies of retired men are eagerly filled by the many unemployed men of the world more happily framed for its business. We do not hear these accusations raised against the painter who wears away his days at his easel, or the musician by the side of his instrument; and much less should we against the legal and the

commercial character; yet all these are as much withdrawn from public and private life as the literary character. The desk is as insulating as the library. Yet the man who is working for his individual interest, is more highly estimated than the retired student, whose disinterested pursuits are at least more profitable to the world than to himself. La Bruyère discovered the world's erroneous estimate of literary labour: "There requires a better name," he says, "to be bestowed on the leisure (the idleness he calls it) of the literary character,—to meditate, to compose, to read and to be tranquil, should be called *working*." But so invisible is the progress of intellectual pursuits, and so rarely are the objects palpable to the observers, that the literary character appears to be denied for his pursuits, what cannot be refused to every other. That unremitting application and unbroken series of their thoughts, admired in every profession, is only complained of in that one whose professors with so much sincerity mourn over the brevity of life, which has often closed on them while sketching their works.

It is, however, only in solitude that the genius of eminent men has been formed. There their first thoughts sprang, and there it will become them to find their last: for the solitude of old age —and old age must be often in solitude—may be found the happiest with the literary character. Solitude is the nurse of enthusiasm, and enthusiasm is the true parent of genius. In all ages solitude has been called for—has been flown to. No considerable work was ever composed, till its author, like an ancient magician, first retired to the grove, or to the closet, to invocate. When genius languishes in an irksome solitude among crowds, that is the moment to fly into seclusion and meditation. There is a society in the deepest solitude; in all the men of genius of the past

"First of your kind, Society divine!"

and in themselves; for there only can they indulge in the romances of their soul, and there only can they occupy themselves in their dreams and their vigils, and, with the morning, fly without interruption to the labour they had reluctantly quitted. If there be not periods when they shall allow their days to melt harmoniously into each other, if they do not pass whole weeks together in their study, without intervening absences, they will not be admitted into the last recess of the Muses. Whether their glory come from researches, or from enthusiasm, Time, with not a feather ruffled on his wings, Time alone opens discoveries and kindles meditation. This desert of solitude, so vast and so dreary to the man of the world, to the man of genius is the magical garden of Armida, whose enchantments arose amidst solitude, while solitude was everywhere among those enchantments.

Whenever Michael Angelo, that "divine madman," as Richardson once wrote on the back of one of his drawings, was meditating on some great design, he closed himself up from the world. "Why do you lead so solitary a life?" asked a friend. "Art," replied the sublime artist, "Art is a jealous god; it requires the whole and entire man." During his mighty labour in the Sistine Chapel, he refused to have any communication with any person even at his own house. Such undisturbed and solitary attention is demanded even by undoubted genius as the price of performance. How then shall we deem of that feebler race who exult in occasional excellence, and who so often deceive themselves by mistaking the evanescent flashes of genius for that holier flame which burns on its altar, because the fuel is incessantly supplied?

We observe men of genius, in public situations, sighing for this solitude. Amidst the impediments of the world, they are doomed to view their intellectual banquet often rising before them, like some fairy delusion, never to taste it. The great Verulam often complained of the disturbances of his public life, and rejoiced in the occasional retirement he stole from public affairs. "And now, because I am in the country, I will send you some of my country fruits, which with me are good meditations; when I am in the city, they are choked with business." Lord Clarendon, whose life so happily combined the contemplative with the active powers of man, dwells on three periods of retirement which he enjoyed; he always took pleasure in relating the great tranquillity of spirit experienced during his solitude at Jersey, where for more than two years, employed on his History, he daily wrote "one sheet of large paper with his own hand." At the close of his life, his literary labours in his other retirements are detailed with a proud satisfaction. Each of his solitudes occasioned a new acquisition; to one he owed the Spanish, to another the French, and to a third the Italian literature. The public are not yet acquainted with the fertility of Lord Clarendon's literary labours. It was not vanity that induced Scipio to declare of solitude, that it had no loneliness for him, since he voluntarily retired amidst a glorious life to his Linternum. Cicero was uneasy amid applauding Rome, and has distinguished his numerous works by the titles of his various villas. Aulus Gellius marked his solitude by his "Attic Nights." The "Golden Grove" of Jeremy Taylor is the produce of his retreat at the Earl of Carberry's seat in Wales; and the "Diversions of Purley" preserved a man of genius for posterity. Vol-

TAIRE had talents well adapted for society; but at one period of his life he passed five years in the most secret seclusion, and indeed usually lived in retirement. MONTESQUIEU quitted the brilliant circles of Paris for his books and his meditations, and was ridiculed by the gay trifiers he deserted; "but my great work," he observes in triumph, "avance à pas de géant." HARRINGTON, to compose his "Oceana," severed himself from the society of his friends. DESCARTES, inflamed by genius, hires an obscure house in an unfrequented quarter at Paris, and there he passes two years, unknown to his acquaintance. ADAM SMITH, after the publication of his first work, withdrew into a retirement that lasted ten years: even Hume rallies him for separating himself from the world; but by this means the great political inquirer satisfied the world by his great work. And thus it was with men of genius long ere PETRARCH withdrew to his Val chiusa.

The interruption of visitors by profession has been feelingly lamented by men of letters. The mind, maturing its speculations, feels the unexpected conversation of cold ceremony, chilling as March winds over the blossoms of the Spring. Those unhappy beings who wander from house to house, privileged by the charter of society to obstruct the knowledge they cannot impart, to weary because they are wearied, or to seek amusement at the cost of others, belong to that class of society which have affixed no other idea to time than that of getting rid of it. These are judges not the best qualified to comprehend the nature and evil of their depredations in the silent apartment of the studious, who may be often driven to exclaim, in the words of the Psalmist, "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; *for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.*"

When MONTESQUIEU was deeply engaged in his great work, he writes to a friend:—"The favour which your friend Mr. Hein often does me to pass his mornings with me, occasions great damage to my work as well by his impure French as the length of his details."—"We are afraid," said some of those visitors to BAXTER, "that we break in upon your time."—"To be sure you do," replied the disturbed and blunt scholar. To hint as gently as he could to his friends that he was avaricious of time, one of the learned Italians had a prominent inscription over the door of his study, intimating that whoever remained there must join in his labours. The amiable MELANCTHON, incapable of a harsh expression, when he received these idle visits, only noted down the time he had expended, that he might reanimate his industry, and not lose a day. EVELYN, continually importuned by morning visitors, or "taken up by other impertinencies of my life in the country," stole his hours from his night-rest "to redeem his losses." The literary character has been driven to the most inventive shifts to escape the irruption of a formidable party at a single rush, who enter, without "besieging or beseeching," as Milton has it. The late Mr. Ellis, a man of elegant tastes and poetical temperament, on one of these occasions, at his country-house, assured a literary friend, that when driven to the last, he usually made his escape by a leap out of the window; and Boileau has noticed a similiar dilemma when at the villa of the President Lamoignon, while they were holding their delightful conversations in his grounds.

"Quelquefois de fâcheux arrivent trois volées,
Que du parc à l'instant assiègent les allées;
Alors sauve qui peut, et quatre fois heureux
Qui sait s'échapper, à quelque antre ignoré d'eux."

BRAND HOLLIS endeavoured to hold out "the idea of singularity as a shield;" and the great ROBERT BOYLE was compelled to advertise in a newspaper that he must decline visits on certain days, that he might have leisure to finish some of his works*.

BOCCACCIO has given an interesting account of the mode of life of the studious PETRARCH, for on a visit he found that PETRARCH would not suffer his hours of study to be broken into even by the person whom of all men he loved most, and did not quit his morning studies for his guest, who during that time occupied himself by reading or transcribing the works of his master. At the decline of day Petrarch quitted his study for his garden, where he delighted to open his heart in mutual confidence.

But this solitude, at first a necessity, and then a pleasure, at length is not borne without repining. To tame the fervid wildness of youth to the strict regularities of study, is a sacrifice performed by the votary; but even MILTON appears to have felt this irksome period of life; for in the preface to Smectymnuus he says:—"It is but justice not to defraud of due esteem the *wearisome labours* and *studious watchings* wherein I have spent and *tired out* almost a whole youth." COWLEY, that enthusiast for seclusion, in his retirement calls himself "the Melancholy Cowley." I have seen an original letter of this poet to Evelyn, where he expresses his eagerness to see Sir George Mackenzie's Essay on Solitude; for a copy of which he had sent over the town, without obtaining one, being "either all bought up, or burnt in the fire of London."—"I am the more desirous," he says, "because it is a subject in which I am most

* This curious advertisement is preserved in Dr. Birch's Life of Boyle, p. 272.

deeply interested." Thus COWLEY was requiring a book to confirm his predilection, and we know he made the experiment, which did not prove a happy one. We find even GIBBON, with all his fame about him, anticipating the dread he entertained of solitude in advanced life. "I feel, and shall continue to feel, that domestic solitude, however it may be alleviated by the world, by study, and even by friendship, is a comfortless state, which will grow more painful as I descend in the vale of years." And again:—"Your visit has only served to remind me that man, however amused or occupied in his closet, was not made to live alone."

Had the mistaken notions of Sprat not deprived us of COWLEY'S correspondence, we doubtless had viewed the picture of lonely genius touched by a tender pencil. But we have SHENSTONE, and GRAY, and SWIFT. The heart of SHENSTONE bleeds in the dead oblivion of solitude:—"Now I am come from a visit, every little uneasiness is sufficient to introduce my whole train of melancholy considerations, and to make me utterly dissatisfied with the life I now lead, and the life I foresee I shall lead. I am angry, and envious, and dejected, and frantic, and disregard all present things, as becomes a madman to do. I am infinitely pleased, though it is a gloomy joy, with the application of Dr. Swift's complaint, that he is forced to die in a rage, like a rat in a poisoned hole." Let the lover of solitude muse on its picture throughout the year, in this stanza, by the same amiable but suffering poet:—

Tedious again to curse the drizzling day,
Again to trace the wintry tracks of snow,
Or, soothed by vernal airs, again survey
The self-same hawthorns bud, and cowslips blow.

SWIFT'S letters paint with terrifying colours a picture of solitude; and at length his despair closed with idiotism. Even the playful muse of GRESSET throws a sombre querulousness over the solitude of men of genius:—

—— Je les vois, victimes du génie,
Au foible prix d'un éclat passager,
Vivre isolés, sans jouir de la vie!
Vingt ans d'ennuis pour quelques jours de gloire.

Such are the necessity, the pleasures, and the inconveniences of solitude! It ceases to be a question, whether men of genius should blend with the masses of society; for whether in solitude, or in the world, of all others they must learn to live with themselves. It is in the world that they borrow the sparks of thought that fly upwards and perish; but the flame of genius can only be lighted in their own solitary breast.

CHAPTER XI.

The meditations of genius.—A work on the art of meditation not yet produced.—Predisposing the mind.—Imagination awakens imagination.—Generating feelings by music.—Slight habits.—Darkness and silence, by suspending the exercise of our senses, increase the vivacity of our conceptions.—The arts of memory.—Memory the foundation of genius.—Inventions by several to preserve their own moral and literary character.—And to assist their studies.—The meditations of genius depend on habit.—Of the night-time.—A day of meditation should precede a day of composition.—Works of magnitude from slight conceptions.—Of thoughts never written.—The art of meditation exercised at all hours and places.—Continuity of attention the source of philosophical discoveries.—Stillness of meditation the first state of existence in genius.

A CONTINUITY of attention, a patient quietness of mind, forms one of the characteristics of genius. To think, and to feel, constitute the two grand divisions of men of genius—the men of reasoning and the men of imagination. There is a thread in our thoughts, as there is a pulse in our hearts; he who can hold the one, knows how to think; and he who can move the other, knows how to feel.

A work on the art of meditation has not yet been produced; yet such a work might prove of immense advantage to him who never happened to have more than one solitary idea. The pursuit of a single principle has produced a great system. Thus probably we owe ADAM SMITH to the French economists. And a loose hint has conducted to a new discovery. Thus GIRARD, taking advantage of an idea first started by Fenelon, produced his "Synonymes." But while, in every manual art, every great workman improves on his predecessor, of the art of the mind, notwithstanding the facility of practice, and our incessant experience, millions are yet ignorant of the first rudiments; and men of genius themselves are rarely acquainted with the materials they are working on. Certain constituent principles of the mind itself, which the study of metaphysics curiously develops, offer many important regulations in this desirable art. We may even suspect, since men of genius in the present age have confided to us the secrets of their studies, that this art may be carried on by more obvious means than at first would appear, and even by mechanical contrivances and practical habits. A mind well organised may be regulated by a single contrivance, as by a bit of lead we govern the fine machinery by which we track the flight of time. Many secrets in this art of the mind yet remain as insulated facts, which may hereafter enter into an experimental history.

Johnson has a curious observation on the Mind itself. He thinks it obtains a stationary point,

from whence it can never advance, occurring before the middle of life. "When the powers of nature have attained their intended energy, they can be no more advanced. The shrub can never become a tree. Nothing then remains but *practice* and *experience*; and perhaps *why they do so little, may be worth inquiry**." The result of this inquiry would probably lay a broader foundation for this art of the mind than we have hitherto possessed. ADAM FERGUSON has expressed himself with sublimity:—"The lustre which man casts around him, like the flame of a meteor, shines only while his motion continues; the moments of rest and of obscurity are the same." What is this art of meditation, but the power of withdrawing ourselves from the world, to view that world moving within ourselves, while we are in repose? As the artist, by an optical instrument, reflects and concentrates the boundless landscape around him, and patiently traces all nature in that small space.

There is a government of our thoughts. The mind of genius can be made to take a particular disposition or train of ideas. It is a remarkable circumstance in the studies of men of genius, that previous to composition they have often awakened their imagination by the imagination of their favourite masters. By touching a magnet, they became a magnet. A circumstance has been recorded of GRAY, by Mr. Mathias, "as worthy of all acceptation among the higher votaries of the divine art, when they are assured that Mr. Gray never sate down to compose any poetry without previously, and for a considerable time, reading the works of Spenser." But the circumstance was not unusual with Malherbe, Corneille, and Racine; and the most fervid verses of Homer, and the most tender of Euripides, were often repeated by Milton. Even antiquity exhibits the same exciting intercourse of the mind of genius. Cicero informs us how his eloquence caught inspiration from a constant study of the Latin and Grecian poetry; and it has been recorded of Pompey, who was Great even in his youth, that he never undertook any considerable enterprise, without animating his genius by having read to him the character of Achilles in the first Iliad; although he acknowledged that the enthusiasm he caught came rather from the poet than the hero. When BOSSUET had to compose a funeral oration, he was accustomed to retire for several days to his study, to ruminate over the pages of Homer; and when asked the reason of this habit, he exclaimed, in these lines,

——— magnam mihi mentem, animumque
Delius inspiret Vates.

* I recommend the reader to turn to the whole passage, in Johnson's Letters to Mrs. Thrale, vol. i. p. 296.

It is on the same principle of predisposing the mind, that many have first generated their feelings by the symphonies of music. ALFIERI often before he wrote prepared his mind by listening to music: "Almost all my tragedies were sketched in my mind either in the act of hearing music, or a few hours after"—a circumstance which has been recorded of many others. Lord BACON had music often played in the room adjoining his study: MILTON listened to his organ for his solemn inspiration, and music was even necessary to WARBURTON. The symphonies which awoke in the poet sublime emotions, might have composed the inventive mind of the great critic in the visions of his theoretical mysteries. A celebrated French preacher, Bourdaloue or Massillon, was once found playing on a violin, to screw his mind up to the pitch, preparatory for his sermon, which within a short interval he was to preach before the court. CURRAN'S favourite mode of meditation was with his violin in his hand; for hours together would he forget himself, running voluntaries over the strings, while his imagination in collecting its tones was opening all his faculties for the coming emergency at the bar. When LEONARDO DA VINCI was painting his Lisa, commonly called *La Joconde*, he had musicians constantly in waiting, whose light harmonies, by their associations, inspired feelings of

"Tipsy dance and revelry."

There are slight habits which may be contracted by genius, which assist the action of the mind; but these are of a nature so trivial, that they seem ridiculous when they have not been experienced: but the imaginative race exist by the acts of imagination. HAYDN would never sit down to compose without being in full dress, with his great diamond ring, and the finest paper to write down his musical compositions. ROUSSEAU has told us, when occupied by his celebrated romance, of the influence of the rose-coloured knots of ribbon which tied his portfolio, his fine paper, his brilliant ink, and his gold sand. Similar facts are related of many. Whenever APOSTOLO ZENO, the predecessor of Metastasio, prepared himself to compose a new drama, he used to say to himself, "*Apostolo! recordati che questa è la prima opera che dai in luce.*"——"Apostolo! remember that this is the first opera you are presenting to the public." We are scarcely aware how we may govern our thoughts by means of our sensations: DE LUC was subject to violent bursts of passion; but he calmed the interior tumult by the artifice of filling his mouth with sweets and comfits. When GOLDONI found his sleep disturbed by the obtrusive ideas still floating from the studies of the day, he contrived to lull himself to rest by conning

in his mind a vocabulary of the Venetian dialect, translating some word into Tuscan and French; which being a very uninteresting occupation, at the third or fourth version this recipe never failed. This was an art of withdrawing attention from the greater to the less emotion; by which, as the interest weakened, the excitement ceased. MENDELSSOHN, whose feeble and too sensitive frame was often reduced to the last stage of suffering by intellectual exertion, when engaged in any point of difficulty, would in an instant contrive a perfect cessation from thinking, by mechanically going to the window, and counting the tiles upon the roof of his neighbour's house. Such facts show how much art may be concerned in the government of our thoughts.

It is an unquestionable fact, that some profound thinkers cannot pursue their intellectual operations amidst the distractions of light and noise. With them, attention to what is passing within is interrupted by the discordant impressions from objects pressing and obtruding on the external senses. There are, indeed, instances, as in the case of Priestley and others, of authors who have pursued their literary works amidst conversation and their family; but such minds are not the most original thinkers, and the most refined writers; or their subjects are of a nature which require little more than judgment and diligence. It is the mind only in its fulness which can brood over thoughts till the incubation produces vitality. Such is the feeling in this act of study. In Plutarch's time they showed a subterraneous place of study built by Demosthenes, and where he often continued for two or three months together.—Malebranche, Hobbes, Corneille, and others, darkened their apartment, when they wrote, to concentrate their thoughts, as Milton says of the mind, "in the spacious circuits of her musing." It is in proportion as we can suspend the exercise of all our other senses that the liveliness of our conception increases—this is the observation of the most elegant metaphysician of our times; and when Lord Chesterfield advised that his pupil, whose attention wandered on every passing object, which unfitted him for study, should be instructed in a darkened apartment, he was aware of this principle; the boy would learn and retain what he learned ten times as well. We close our eyes whenever we would collect our mind together, or trace more distinctly an object which seems to have faded away in our recollections. The study of an author or an artist would be ill placed in the midst of a beautiful landscape; the Penseroso of Milton, "hid from day's garish eye," is the man of genius. A secluded and naked apartment, with nothing but a desk, a chair, and a single sheet of paper, was for fifty years the study of BUFFON; the single ornament was a print of Newton placed before his eyes—nothing broke into the unity of his reveries. Cumberland's liveliest comedy, "the West Indian," was written in an unfurnished apartment close in front of an Irish turf-stack; and our comic writer was fully aware of the advantages of the situation. "In all my hours of study," says that elegant writer, "it has been through life my object so to locate myself as to have little or nothing to distract my attention, and therefore, brilliant rooms or pleasant prospects I have ever avoided. A dead wall, or as in the present case, an Irish turf-stack, are not attractions that can call off the fancy from its pursuits; and whilst in these pursuits it can find interest and occupation, it wants no outward aid to cheer it. My father I believe rather wondered at my choice." The principle ascertained, the consequences are obvious.

The arts of memory have at all times excited the attention of the studious; they open a world of undivulged mysteries, where every one seems to form some discovery of his own, rather exciting his astonishment than enlarging his comprehension. LE SAGE, a modern philosopher, had a memory singularly defective. Incapable of acquiring languages, and deficient in all those studies which depend on the exercise of the memory, it became the object of his subsequent exertions to supply this deficiency by the order and method he observed in arranging every new fact or idea he obtained; so that in reality with a very bad memory, it appears that he was still enabled to recall at will any idea or any knowledge which he had stored up. JOHN HUNTER happily illustrated the advantages which every one derives from putting his thoughts in writing, "it resembles a tradesman taking stock; without which he never knows either what he possesses, or in what he is deficient." The late WILLIAM HUTTON, a man of an original cast of mind, as an experiment in memory, opened a book which he had divided into 365 columns, according to the days of the year: he resolved to try to recollect an anecdote, for every column, as insignificant and remote as he was able, rejecting all under ten years of age; and to his surprise, he filled those spaces for small reminiscences, within ten columns; but till this experiment had been made, he never conceived the extent of his faculty. WOLF, the German metaphysician, relates of himself, that he had, by the most persevering habit, in bed and amidst darkness, resolved his algebraic problems, and geometrically composed all his methods merely by the aid of his imagination and memory; and when in the daytime he verified the one and the other of these operations, he had always found them true.

Unquestionably such astonishing instances of a well-regulated memory depend on the practice of its art gradually formed, by frequent associations. When we reflect, that whatever we know, and whatever we feel, are the very smallest portions of all the knowledge we have been acquiring, and all the feelings we have experienced through life, how desirable would be that art, which should again open the scenes which have vanished, and revivify the emotions which other impressions have effaced? But the faculty of memory, although perhaps the most manageable of all others, is considered a subordinate one; it seems only a grasping and accumulating power, and in the work of genius is imagined to produce nothing of itself; yet is memory the foundation of Genius whenever this faculty is associated with imagination and passion; with men of genius it is a chronology not merely of events, but of emotions; hence they remember nothing that is not interesting to their feelings. Persons of inferior capacity have imperfect recollections from feeble impressions. Are not the incidents of the great novelist often founded on the common ones of life? and the personages so admirably alive in his fictions, were they not discovered among the crowd? The ancients have described the Muses as the daughters of Memory; an elegant fiction, indicating the natural and intimate connexion between imagination and reminiscence.

The arts of memory will form a saving-bank of genius, to which it may have recourse, as a wealth which it can accumulate imperceptibly amidst the ordinary expenditure. LOCKE taught us the first rudiments of this art, when he showed us how he stored his thoughts and his facts, by an artificial arrangement; and Addison, before he commenced his Spectators, had amassed three folios of materials. But the higher step will be the volume which shall give an account of a man to himself, in which a single observation immediately becomes a clue of past knowledge, restoring to him his lost studies, and his evanescent existence. Self-contemplation makes the man more nearly entire: and to preserve the past, is half of immortality.

The worth of the diary must depend on the diarist; but "Of the things which concern himself," as MARCUS ANTONINUS entitles his celebrated work—this volume, reserved for solitary contemplation, should be considered as a future relic of ourselves. The late Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY commenced, even in the most occupied period of his life, a diary of his last twelve years; which he declares in his will, "I bequeath to my children, as it may be serviceable to them." Perhaps in this, Romilly bore in mind the example of another eminent lawyer, the celebrated WHITELOCKE, who had drawn up a great work, entitled "Remembrances of the Labours of WHITELOCKE, in the Annals of his Life, for the Instruction of his Children." That neither of these family books has appeared, is our common loss. Such legacies from such men, ought to become the inheritance of their countrymen.

To register the transactions of the day, with observations on what, and on whom, he had seen, was the advice of Lord KAIMES to the late Mr. CURWEN; and for years his head never reached its pillow without performing a task which habit had made easy. "Our best and surest road to knowledge," said Lord KAIMES, "is by profiting from the labours of others, and making their experience our own." In this manner CURWEN tells us he acquired by habit *the art of thinking*; and he is an able testimony of the practicability and success of the plan, for he candidly tells us, "Though many would sicken at the idea of imposing such a task upon themselves, yet the attempt, persevered in for a short time, would soon become a custom more irksome to omit, than it was difficult to commence."

Could we look into the libraries of authors, the studios of artists, and the laboratories of chemists, and view what they have only sketched, or what lie scattered in fragments, and could we trace their first and last thoughts, we might discover that we have lost more than we possess. There we might view foundations without superstructures, once the monuments of their hopes! A living architect recently exhibited to the public an extraordinary picture of his mind, in his "Architectural Visions of early fancy in the gay morning of youth," and which now were "dreams in the evening of life." In this picture he had thrown together all the architectural designs his imagination had conceived, but which remained unexecuted. The feeling is true, however whimsical such unaccomplished fancies might appear, when thrown together into one picture. In literary history such instances have occurred but too frequently: the imagination of youth, measuring neither time nor ability, creates what neither time nor ability can execute. ADAM SMITH, in the preface to the first edition of his "Theory of Sentiments," announced a large work on law and government; and in a late edition he still repeated the promise, observing, that "Thirty years ago I entertained no doubt of being able to execute everything which it announced." The "Wealth of Nations" was but a fragment of this greater work. Surely men of genius, of all others, may mourn over the length of art and the brevity of life!

Yet many glorious efforts, and even artificial inventions, have been contrived to assist and save its moral and literary existence in that perpetual race which genius holds with time. We trace its

triumph in the studious days of such men as GIBBON, Sir WILLIAM JONES, and PRIESTLEY. An invention by which the moral qualities and the acquisitions of the literary character were combined and advanced together, is what Sir WILLIAM JONES ingeniously calls his "Andrometer." In that scale of human attainments and enjoyments which ought to accompany the eras of human life, it reminds us of what was to be learned, and what to be practised, assigning to stated periods their appropriate pursuits. An occasional recurrence, even to so fanciful a standard, would be like looking on a clock, to remind the student how he loiters, or how he advances in the great day's work. Such romantic plans have been often invented by the ardour of genius. There was no communication between Sir WILLIAM JONES and Dr. FRANKLIN; yet when young, the self-taught philosopher of America pursued the same genial and generous devotion to his own moral and literary excellence.

"It was about this time I conceived," says Franklin, "the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection," &c. He began a daily journal, in which against thirteen virtues accompanied by seven columns to mark the days of the week, he dotted down what he considered to be his failures; he found himself fuller of faults than he had imagined, but at length his blots diminished. This self-examination, or this "Faultbook," as Lord Shaftesbury would have called it, was always carried about him. These books still exist. An additional contrivance was that of journalising his twenty-four hours, of which he has furnished us both with descriptions and specimens of the method; and he closes with a solemn assurance, that "It may be well my posterity should be informed, that to this *little artifice* their ancestor owes the constant felicity of his life." Thus we see the fancy of JONES and the sense of FRANKLIN, unconnected either by character or communication, but acted on by the same glorious feeling to create their own moral and literary character, inventing similar although extraordinary methods.

The memorials of GIBBON and PRIESTLEY present us with the experience and the habits of the Literary Character. "What I have known," says Dr. Priestley, "with respect to myself, has tended much to lessen both my admiration and my contempt of others. Could we have entered into the mind of Sir Isaac Newton, and have traced all the steps by which he produced his great works, we might see nothing very extraordinary in the process." Our student, with an ingenuous simplicity, opens to us that "variety of mechanical expedients by which he secured and arranged his thoughts," and that discipline of the mind, by means of a peculiar arrangement of his studies for the day and for the year, in which he rivalled the calm and unalterable system pursued by GIBBON, BUFFON, and VOLTAIRE, who often only combined the knowledge they obtained by humble methods. They knew what to ask for; and where what is wanted may be found: they made use of an intelligent secretary; aware, as Lord BACON has expressed it, that some books "may be read by deputy."

BUFFON laid down an excellent rule to obtain originality, when he advised the writer first to exhaust his own thoughts, before he attempted to consult other writers; and GIBBON, the most experienced reader of all our writers, offers the same important advice to an author. When engaged on a particular subject, he tells us, "I suspended my perusal of any new book on the subject, till I had reviewed all that I knew, or believed, or had thought on it, that I might be qualified to discern how much the authors added to my original stock." The advice of Lord BACON, that we should pursue our studies in whatever disposition the mind may be, is excellent. If happily disposed, we shall gain a great step; and if indisposed, we "shall work out the knots and strands of the mind, and make the middle times the more pleasant." Some active lives have passed away in incessant competition, like those of MOZART, CICERO, and VOLTAIRE, who were restless, perhaps unhappy, when their genius was quiescent. To such minds the constant zeal they bring to their labour supplies the absence of that inspiration which cannot always be the same, nor always at its height.

Industry is the feature by which the ancients so frequently describe an eminent character; such phrases as "*incredibili industria; diligentia singulari*," are usual. We of these days cannot conceive the industry of CICERO; but he has himself told us that he suffered no moments of his leisure to escape from him. Not only his spare hours were consecrated to his books; but even on days of business he would take a few turns in his walk, to meditate or to dictate; many of his letters are dated before daylight, some from the senate, at his meals, and amid his morning levées. The dawn of day was the summons of study to Sir WILLIAM JONES. JOHN HUNTER, who was constantly engaged in the search and consideration of new facts, described what was passing in his mind by a remarkable illustration:—he said to Abernethy, "My mind is like a bee-hive." A simile which was singularly correct; "for," observes Abernethy, "in the midst of buz and apparent confusion, there was great order, regularity of structure, and abundant food, collected with incessant industry from the choicest stores of nature." Thus one man of genius is the ablest

commentator on the thoughts and feelings of another. When we reflect on the magnitude of the labours of Cicero, and the elder Pliny, on those of Erasmus, Petrarch, Baronius, Lord Bacon, Usher, and Bayle, we seem at the base of these monuments of study, we seem scarcely awake to admire. These were the laborious instructors of mankind; their age has closed.

Yet let not those other artists of the mind, who work in the airy looms of fancy and wit, imagine that they are weaving their webs, without the direction of a principle, and without a secret habit which they have acquired, and which some have imagined, by its quickness and facility, to be an instinct. "Habit," says REID, "differs from instinct, not in its nature, but in its origin; the last being natural, the first acquired." What we are accustomed to do, gives a facility and proneness to do on like occasions; and there may be even an art, unperceived by themselves, in opening and pursuing a scene of pure invention, and even in the happiest turns of wit. One who had all the experience of such an artist has employed the very terms we have used, of "mechanical" and "habitual." "Be assured," says Goldsmith, "that wit is in some measure mechanical; and that a man long habituated to catch at even its resemblance, will at last be happy enough to possess the substance. By a long habit of writing he acquires a justness of thinking, and a mastery of manner, which holiday writers, even with ten times his genius, may vainly attempt to equal." The wit of BUTLER was not extemporaneous, but painfully elaborated from notes which he incessantly accumulated; and the familiar *rime* of BERNI the burlesque poet, his existing manuscripts will prove, were produced by perpetual re-touches. Even in the sublime efforts of imagination, this art of meditation may be practised; and ALFIERI has shown us, that in those energetic tragic dramas which were often produced in a state of enthusiasm, he pursued a regulated process. "All my tragedies have been composed three times;" and he describes the three stages of conception, development, and versifying. "After these three operations, I proceed, like other authors, to polish, correct, or amend."

"All is habit in mankind, even virtue itself!" exclaimed METASTASIO; and we may add, even the meditations of genius. Some of its boldest conceptions are indeed fortuitous, starting up and vanishing almost in the perception; like that giant form, sometimes seen amidst the glaciers, afar from the opposite traveller, moving as he moves, stopping as he stops, yet, in a moment lost, and perhaps never more seen, although but his own reflection! Often in the still obscurity of the night, the ideas, the studies, the whole history of the day, is acted over again. There are probably few mathematicians who have not dreamed of an interesting problem, observes Professor Dugald Stewart. In these vivid scenes we are often so completely converted into spectators, that a great poetical contemporary of our country thinks that even his dreams should not pass away unnoticed, and keeps what he calls a register of nocturnals. TASSO has recorded some of his poetical dreams, which were often disturbed by waking himself in repeating a verse aloud. "This night I awaked with this verse in my mouth—

> "*E i duo che manda il nero adusto suolo.*"
> "The two, the *dark* and burning soil has sent."

He discovered that the epithet *black* was not suitable; "I again fell asleep, and in a dream I read in Strabo that the sand of Ethiopia and Arabia is extremely *white*, and this morning I have found the place. You see what learned dreams I have."

But incidents of this nature are not peculiar to this great bard. The *improvvisatori* poets, we are told, cannot sleep after an evening's effusion; the rhymes are still ringing in their ears, and imagination, if they have any, will still haunt them. Their previous state of excitement breaks into the calm of sleep; for, like the ocean, when its swell is subsiding, the waves still heave and beat. A poet, whether a Milton or a Blackmore, will ever find that his muse will visit his "slumbers nightly." His fate is much harder than that of the great minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who on retiring to rest could throw aside his political intrigues with his clothes; but Sir Robert, to judge by his portrait, and anecdotes of him, had a sleekiness and good-humour, and an unalterable equanimity of countenance, not the portion of men of genius: indeed one of these has regretted that his sleep was so profound as not to be interrupted by dreams; from a throng of fantastic ideas he imagined that he could have drawn new sources of poetic imagery. The historian DE THOU was one of those great literary characters who, all his life, was preparing to write the history which he afterwards composed; omitting nothing, in his travels and his embassies, which went to the formation of a great man, DE THOU has given a very curious account of his dreams. Such was his passion for study, and his ardent admiration of the great men whom he conversed with, that he often imagined in his sleep that he was travelling in Italy, Germany, and in England, where he saw and consulted the learned, and examined their curious libraries. He had all his lifetime these literary dreams, but more particularly in his travels they reflected these images of the day.

If memory do not chain down these hurrying fading children of the imagination, and

"Snatch the faithless fugitives to light"

with the beams of the morning, the mind suddenly finds itself forsaken and solitary. ROUSSEAU has uttered a complaint on this occasion. Full of enthusiasm, he devoted to the subject of his thoughts, as was his custom, the long sleepless intervals of his nights. Meditating in bed with his eyes closed, he turned over his periods in a tumult of ideas; but when he rose and had dressed, all was vanished; and when he sat down to his papers, he had nothing to write. Thus genius has its vespers and its vigils, as well as its matins, which we have been so often told are the true hours of its inspiration; but every hour may be full of inspiration for him who knows to meditate. No man was more practised in this art of the mind than POPE, and even the night was not an unregarded portion of his poetical existence, not less than with LEONARDO DA VINCI, who tells us how often he found the use of recollecting the ideas of what he had considered in the day after he had retired to bed, encompassed by the silence and obscurity of the night. Sleepless nights are the portion of genius when engaged in its work; the train of reasoning is still pursued; the images of fancy catch a fresh illumination; and even a happy expression shall linger in the ear of him who turns about for the soft composure to which his troubled spirit cannot settle.

But while with genius so much seems fortuitous, in its great operations the march of the mind appears regular, and requires preparation. The intellectual faculties are not always coexistent, or do not always act simultaneously. Whenever any particular faculty is highly active, while the others are languid, the work, as a work of genius, may be very deficient. Hence the faculties, in whatever degree they exist, are unquestionably enlarged by *meditation*. It seems trivial to observe that meditation should precede composition, but we are not always aware of its importance; the truth is, that it is a difficulty unless it be a habit. We write, and we find we have written ill; we re-write, and feel we have written well: in the second act of composition we have acquired the necessary meditation. Still we rarely carry on our meditation so far as its practice would enable us. Many works of mediocrity might have approached to excellence, had this art of the mind been exercised. Many volatile writers might have reached even to deep thinking, had they bestowed a day of meditation before a day of composition, and thus engendered their thoughts. Many productions of genius have originally been enveloped in feebleness and obscurity, which have only been brought to perfection by repeated acts of the mind. There is a maxim of Confucius, which in the translation seems quaint, but which is pregnant with sense—

"Labour, but slight not meditation;
Meditate, but slight not labour."

Few works of magnitude presented themselves at once, in their extent and with their associations, to their authors. Two or three striking circumstances, unobserved before, are perhaps all which the man of genius perceives. It is in revolving the subject that the whole mind becomes gradually agitated; as a summer landscape, at the break of day, is wrapt in mist: at first, the sun strikes on a single object, but the light and warmth increasing, the whole scene glows in the noonday of imagination. How beautifully this state of the mind, in the progress of composition, is described by DRYDEN, alluding to his work, "when it was only a confused mass of thoughts, tumbling over one another in the dark; when the fancy was yet in its first work, moving the sleeping images of things towards the light, there to be distinguished, and then either to be chosen or rejected, by the judgment!" At that moment, he adds, "I was in that eagerness of imagination which, by over-pleasing fanciful men, flatters them into the danger of writing." GIBBON tells us of his history, "At the onset, all was dark and doubtful; even the title of the work, the true era of the decline and fall of the empire, &c. I was often tempted to cast away the labour of seven years." WINCKELMAN was long lost in composing his "History of Art;" a hundred fruitless attempts were made, before he could discover a plan amidst the labyrinth. Slight conceptions kindle finished works. A lady asking for a few verses on rural topics of the Abbé De Lille, his specimens pleased, and sketches heaped on sketches produced "Les Jardins." In writing the "Pleasures of Memory," as it happened with "The Rape of the Lock," the poet at first proposed a simple description in a few lines, till conducted by meditation the perfect composition of several years closed in that fine poem. That still valuable work, *L'Art de Penser* of the Port-Royal, was originally projected to teach a young nobleman all that was practically useful in the art of logic in a few days, and was intended to have been written in one morning by the great ARNAULD; but to that profound thinker so many new ideas crowded in that slight task, that he was compelled to call in his friend NICOLLE; and thus a few projected pages closed in a volume so excellent, that our elegant metaphysician has recently declared, that "it is hardly possible to estimate the merits

too highly." Pemberton, who knew NEWTON intimately, informs us that his treatise on Natural Philosophy, full of a variety of profound inventions, was composed by him from scarcely any other materials than the *few propositions he had set down several years before*, and which having resumed, occupied him in writing one year and a half. A curious circumstance has been preserved in the life of the other immortal man in philosophy, Lord BACON. When young, he wrote a letter to Father Fulgentio concerning an Essay of his, to which he gave the title of "The greatest Birth of Time," a title which he censures as too pompous. The Essay itself is lost, but it was the first outline of that great design which he afterwards pursued and finished in his "Instauration of the Sciences." LOCKE himself has informed us, that his great work on "the Human Understanding," when he first put pen to paper, he thought "would have been contained in one sheet, but that the farther he went on, the larger prospect he had." In this manner it would be beautiful to trace the history of the human mind, and observe how a NEWTON and a BACON and a LOCKE were proceeding for thirty years together, in accumulating truth upon truth, and finally building up these fabrics of their invention.

Were it possible to collect some thoughts of great thinkers, which were never written, we should discover vivid conceptions, and an originality they never dared to pursue in their works! Artists have this advantage over authors, that their virgin fancies, their chance felicities, which labour cannot afterwards produce, are constantly perpetuated; and these "studies," as they are called, are as precious to posterity as their more complete designs. In literature we possess one remarkable evidence of these fortuitous thoughts of genius. POPE and SWIFT, being in the country together, observed, that if contemplative men were to notice "the thoughts which suddenly present themselves to their minds when walking in the fields, &c., they might find many as well worth preserving as some of their more deliberate reflections." They made a trial, and agreed to write down such involuntary thoughts as occurred during their stay there. These furnished out the "Thoughts" in Pope's and Swift's Miscellanies*. Among Lord Bacon's Remains, we find a paper entitled "*Sudden thoughts*, set down for profit." At all hours, by the side of VOLTAIRE's bed, or on his table, stood his pen and ink with slips of paper. The margins of his books were covered with his "sudden thoughts." CICERO, in reading, constantly took notes and made comments. There is an art of reading, as well as an art of thinking, and an art of writing.

The art of meditation may be exercised at all hours, and in all places; and men of genius, in their walks, at table, and amidst assemblies, turning the eye of the mind inwards, can form an artificial solitude; retired amidst a crowd, calm amidst distraction, and wise amidst folly. When DOMENICHINO was reproached for his dilatory habits, in not finishing a great picture for which he had contracted, his reply described this method of study: *Eh! Io la sto continuamente dipingendo entro di me*—I am continually painting it within myself. HOGARTH, with an eye always awake to the ridiculous, would catch a character on his thumb-nail. LEONARDO DA VINCI has left a great number of little books which he usually carried in his girdle, that he might instantly sketch whatever he wished to recal to his recollections; and Amoretti discovered, that, in these light sketches, this fine genius was forming a system of physiognomy which he frequently inculcated to his pupils. HAYDN carefully noted down in a pocket-book the passages and ideas which came to him in his walks or amid company. Some of the great actions of men of this habit of mind were first meditated on amidst the noise of a convivial party, or the music of a concert. The victory of Waterloo might have been organised in the ball-room at Brussels; and thus RODNEY, at the table of Lord Sandwich, while the bottle was briskly circulating, being observed arranging bits of cork, and his solitary amusement having excited inquiry, said that he was practising a plan to annihilate an enemy's fleet. This proved to be that discovery of breaking the line, which the happy audacity of the hero afterwards executed. What situation is more common than a sea-voyage, where nothing presents itself to the reflections of most men than irksome observations on the desert of waters? But the constant exercise of the mind by habitual practice is the privilege of a commanding genius; and, in a similar situation, we discover CICERO and Sir WILLIAM JONES acting alike. Amidst the Oriental seas, in a voyage of 12,000 miles, the mind of JONES kindled with delightful enthusiasm, and he has perpetuated those elevating feelings in his discourse to the Asiatic Society; so CICERO on board a ship, sailing slowly along the coast, passing by a town where his friend Trebatius resided, wrote a work which the other had expressed a wish to possess, and of which wish the view of the town had reminded him.

To this habit of continuity of attention, tracing the first simple idea to its remoter consequences,

* This anecdote is found in Ruffhead's Life of Pope, evidently given by Warburton, as was everything of personal knowledge in that tasteless volume of a mere lawyer, who presumed to write the life of a poet.

the philosophical genius owes many of its discoveries. It was one evening in the cathedral of Pisa, that GALILEO observed the vibrations of a brass lustre pendent from the vaulted roof, which had been left swinging by one of the vergers. The habitual meditation of genius combined with an ordinary accident a new idea of science, and hence conceived the invention of measuring time by the medium of a pendulum. Who but a genius of this order, sitting in his orchard, and observing the descent of an apple, could have discovered a new quality in matter, and have ascertained the laws of attraction, by perceiving that the same causes might perpetuate the regular motions of the planetary system; who, but a genius of this order, while viewing boys blowing soap-bladders, could have discovered the properties of light and colours, and then anatomised a ray? FRANKLIN, on board a ship, observing a partial stillness in the waves when they threw down water which had been used for culinary purposes, by the same principle of meditation was led to the discovery of the wonderful property in oil of calming the agitated ocean; and many a ship has been preserved in tempestuous weather, or a landing facilitated on a dangerous surf, by this solitary meditation of genius.

Thus meditation draws out of the most simple truths the strictness of philosophical demonstration; converting even the amusements of schoolboys, or the most ordinary domestic occurrences, into the principle of a new science. The phenomenon of galvanism was familiar to students; yet was there but one man of genius who could take advantage of an accident, give it his name, and fix it as a science. It was while lying in his bath, but still meditating on the means to detect the fraud of the goldsmith who had made Hiero's crown, that the most extraordinary philosopher of antiquity was led to the investigation of a series of propositions demonstrated in the two books of ARCHIMEDES, *De insidentibus in fluido*, still extant; and which a great mathematician admires both for the strictness and elegance of the demonstrations. To as minute a domestic occurrence as GALVANI'S we owe the steam-engine. When the Marquis of WORCESTER was a state prisoner in the Tower, he one day observed, while his meal was preparing in his apartment, that the cover of the vessel being tight, was, by the expansion of the steam, suddenly forced off, and driven up the chimney. His inventive mind was led on in a train of thought with reference to the practical application of steam as a first mover. His observations, obscurely exhibited in his "Century of Inventions," were successively wrought out by the meditations of others, and an incident, to which one can hardly make a formal reference without a risible emotion, terminated in the noblest instance of mechanical power.

Into the stillness of meditation the mind of genius must be frequently thrown; it is a kind of darkness which hides from us all surrounding objects, even in the light of day. This is the first state of existence in genius. In Cicero's "Treatise on Old Age," we find Cato admiring Caius Sulpitius Gallus, who when he sat down to write in the morning, was surprised by the evening; and when he took up his pen in the evening, was surprised by the appearance of the morning. SOCRATES sometimes remained a whole day in immovable meditation, his eyes and countenance directed to one spot, as if in the stillness of death. LA FONTAINE, when writing his comic tales, has been observed early in the morning and late in the evening in the same recumbent posture under the same tree. This quiescent state is a sort of enthusiasm, and renders everything that surrounds us as distant as if an immense interval separated us from the scene. Poggius has told us of DANTE, that he indulged his meditations more strongly than any man he knew; for when deeply busied in reading, he seemed to live only in his ideas. Once the poet went to view a public procession; having entered a bookseller's shop, and taken up a book, he sunk into a reverie; on his return he declared that he had neither seen nor heard a single occurrence in the public exhibition, which had passed unobserved before him. It has been told of a modern astronomer, that one summer night, when he was withdrawing to his chamber, the brightness of the heavens showed a phenomenon: he passed the whole night in observing it; and when they came to him early in the morning, and found him in the same attitude, he said, like one who had been recollecting his thoughts for a few moments, "It must be thus; but I'll go to bed before it is late." He had gazed the entire night in meditation, and was not aware of it. Abernethy has finely painted the situation of NEWTON in this state of mind. I will not change his words, for his words are his feelings. "It was this power of mind—which can contemplate the greatest number of facts or propositions with accuracy—that so eminently distinguished NEWTON from other men. It was this power that enabled him to arrange the whole of a treatise in his thoughts before he committed a single idea to paper. In the exercise of this power, he was known occasionally to have passed a whole night or day, entirely inattentive to surrounding objects."

There is nothing incredible in the stories related of some who have experienced this entranced state in study, where the mind, deliciously inebriated with the object it contemplates, feels nothing, from the excess of feeling, as a philosopher well

describes it. The impressions from our exterior sensations are often suspended by great mental excitement. ARCHIMEDES, involved in the investigation of mathematical truth, and the painters PROTOGENES and PARMEGGIANO, found their senses locked up as it were in meditation, so as to be incapable of withdrawing themselves from their work, even in the midst of the terrors and storming of the place by the enemy. MARINO was so absorbed in the composition of his "Adonis," that he suffered his leg to be burned before the painful sensation grew stronger than the intellectual pleasure of his imagination. Monsieur THOMAS, a modern French writer, and an intense thinker, would sit for hours against a hedge, composing with a low voice, taking the same pinch of snuff for half an hour together, without being aware that it had long disappeared. When he quitted his apartment, after prolonging his studies there, a visible alteration was observed in his person, and the agitation of his recent thoughts was still traced in his air and manner. With eloquent truth BUFFON described those reveries of the student, which compress his day, and mark the hours by the sensations of minutes! "Invention depends on patience: contemplate your subject long; it will gradually unfold till a sort of electric spark convulses for a moment the brain, and spreads down to the very heart a glow of irritation. Then come the luxuries of genius, the true hours for production and composition; hours so delightful, that I have spent twelve or fourteen successively at my writing-desk, and still been in a state of pleasure." Bishop HORNE, whose literary feelings were of the most delicate and lively kind, has beautifully recorded them in his progress through a favourite and lengthened work—his Commentary on the Psalms. He alludes to himself in the third person; yet who but the self-painter could have caught those delicious emotions which are so evanescent in the deep occupation of pleasant studies? "He arose fresh in the morning to his task; the silence of the night invited him to pursue it; and he can truly say, that food and rest were not preferred before it. Every part improved infinitely upon his acquaintance with it, and no one gave him uneasiness but the last, for then he grieved that his work was done."

This eager delight of pursuing study, this impatience of interruption, and this exultation in progress, are alike finely described by MILTON in a letter to his friend Diodati.

"Such is the character of my mind, that no delay, none of the ordinary cessations for rest or otherwise, I had nearly said, care or thinking of the very subject, can hold me back from being hurried on to the destined point, and from completing the great circuit, as it were, of the study in which I am engaged."

Such is the picture of genius viewed in the stillness of MEDITATION; but there is yet a more excited state, when, as if consciousness were mixing with its reveries, in the illusion of a scene, of a person, of a passion, the emotions of the soul affect even the organs of sense. This excitement is experienced when the poet in the excellence of invention, and the philosopher in the force of intellect, alike share in the hours of inspiration and the ENTHUSIASM of genius.

CHAPTER XII.

The enthusiasm of genius.—A state of mind resembling a waking dream distinct from reverie.—The ideal presence distinguished from the real presence.—The senses are really affected in the ideal world, proved by a variety of instances.—Of the rapture or sensation of deep study in art, in science, and literature.—Of perturbed feelings in delirium.—In extreme endurance of attention.—And in visionary illusions.—Enthusiasts in literature and art—of their self-immolations.

WE left the man of genius in the stillness of meditation. We have now to pursue his history through that more excited state which occurs in the most active operations of genius, and which the term *reverie* inadequately indicates. Metaphysical distinctions but ill describe it, and popular language affords no terms for those faculties and feelings which escape the observation of the multitude not affected by the phenomenon.

The illusion produced by a drama on persons of great sensibility, when all the senses are awakened by a mixture of reality with imagination, is the effect experienced by men of genius in their own vivified ideal world. Real emotions are raised by fiction. In a scene, apparently passing in their presence, where the whole train of circumstances succeeds in all the continuity of nature, and where a sort of real existences appear to rise up before them, they themselves become spectators or actors. Their sympathies are excited, and the exterior organs of sense are visibly affected—they even break out into speech, and often accompany their speech with gestures.

In this equivocal state the enthusiast of genius produces his master-pieces. This waking dream is distinct from reverie, where, our thoughts wandering without connexion, the faint impressions are so evanescent as to occur without even being recollected. A day of *reverie* is beautifully painted by ROUSSEAU as distinct from a day of *thinking*: "J'ai des journées délicieuses, errant sans souci, sans projet, sans affaire, de bois en bois, et de rocher en rocher, *rêvant toujours et ne pensant point*." Far different, however, is one closely-

pursued act of meditation, carrying the enthusiast of genius beyond the precinct of actual existence. The act of contemplation then creates the thing contemplated. He is now the busy actor in a world which he himself only views; alone, he hears, he sees, he touches, he laughs, he weeps; his brows and lips, and his very limbs move.

Poets and even painters, who, as Lord Bacon describes witches, "are imaginative," have often involuntarily betrayed, in the act of composition, those gestures which accompany this enthusiasm. Witness DOMENICHINO enraging himself, that he might portray anger. Nor were these creative gestures quite unknown to QUINTILIAN, who has nobly compared them to the lashings of the lion's tail, rousing him to combat. Actors of genius have accustomed themselves to walk on the stage for an hour before the curtain was drawn, that they might fill their minds with all the phantoms of the drama, and so suspend all communion with the external world. The great actress of our age, during representation, always had the door of her dressing-room open, that she might listen to, and if possible watch the whole performance, with the same attention as was experienced by the spectators. By this means she possessed herself of all the illusion of the scene; and when she herself entered on the stage, her dreaming thoughts then brightened into a vision, where the perceptions of the soul were as firm and clear as if she were really the Constance or the Katherine whom she only represented *.

Aware of this peculiar faculty, so prevalent in the more vivid exercise of genius, Lord KAIMES seems to have been the first who, in a work on criticism, attempted to name *the ideal presence*, to distinguish it from the *real presence* of things. It has been called the representative faculty, the imaginative state, and many other states and faculties. Call it what we will, no term opens to us the invisible mode of its operations, no metaphysical definition expresses its variable nature. Conscious of the existence of such a faculty, our critic perceived that the conception of it is by no means clear when described in words.

Has not the difference between an actual thing, and its image in a glass, perplexed some philosophers? and it is well known how far the ideal philosophy has been carried by so fine a genius as Bishop BERKLEY. "All are pictures, alike painted on the retina, or optical sensorium!" exclaimed the enthusiast BARRY, who only saw pictures in nature, and nature in pictures. This faculty has had a strange influence over the passionate lovers of statues. We find unquestionable evidence of the vividness of the representative faculty, or the ideal presence, vying with that of reality. EVELYN has described one of this cast of mind, in the librarian of the Vatican, who haunted one of the finest collections at Rome. To these statues he would frequently talk as if they were living persons, often kissing and embracing them. A similar circumstance might be recorded of a man of distinguished talent and literature among ourselves. Wondrous stories are told of the amatorial passion for marble statues; but the wonder ceases, and the truth is established, when the irresistible ideal presence is comprehended; the visions which now bless these lovers of statues, in the modern land of sculpture, Italy, had acted with equal force in ancient Greece. "The Last Judgment," the stupendous ideal presence of MICHAEL ANGELO, seems to have communicated itself to some of his beholders: "As I stood before this picture," a late traveller tells us, "my blood chilled as if the reality were before me, and the very sound of the trumpet seemed to pierce my ears."

Cold and barren tempers without imagination, whose impressions of objects never rise beyond those of memory and reflection, which know only to compare, and not to excite, will smile at this equivocal state of the ideal presence; yet it is a real one to the enthusiast of genius, and it is his happiest and peculiar condition. Destitute of this faculty, no metaphysical aid, no art to be taught him, no mastery of talent, will avail him; unblest with it, the votary will find each sacrifice lying cold on the altar, for no accepting flame from heaven shall kindle it.

This enthusiasm indeed can only be discovered by men of genius themselves; yet when most under its influence, they can least perceive it, as the eye which sees all things cannot view itself; or rather such an attempt would be like searching for the principle of life, which were it found would cease to be life. From an enchanted man we must not expect a narrative of his enchantment; for if he could speak to us reasonably, and like one of ourselves, in that case he would be a man in a state of disenchantment, and then would perhaps yield us no better account than we may trace by our own observations.

There is however something of reality in this state of the ideal presence; for the most familiar instances will show how the nerves of each external sense are put in motion by the idea of the object, as if the real object had been presented to it. The difference is only in the degree. The senses are more concerned in the ideal world than at first appears. The idea of a thing will make us shudder; and the bare imagination of it will often produce a real pain. A curious consequence may be deduced from this principle; MILTON, lingering

* The late Mrs. SIDDONS. She herself communicated this striking circumstance to me.

amid the freshness of nature in Eden, felt all the delights of those elements which he was creating; his nerves moved with the images which excited them. The fierce and wild DANTE, amidst the abysses of his Inferno, must often have been startled by its horrors, and often left his bitter and gloomy spirit in the stings he inflicted on the great criminal. The movable nerves then of the man of genius are a reality; he sees, he hears, he feels by each. How mysterious to us is the operation of this faculty!

A HOMER and a RICHARDSON*, like nature, open a volume large as life itself—embracing a circuit of human existence! This state of the mind has even a reality in it for the generality of persons. In a romance or a drama, tears are often seen in the eyes of the reader or the spectator, who, before they have time to recollect that the whole is fictitious, have been surprised for a moment by a strong conception of a present and existing scene.

Can we doubt of the reality of this faculty, when the visible and outward frame of the man of genius bears witness to its presence? When FIELDING said, "I do not doubt but the most pathetic and affecting scenes have been writ with tears," he probably drew that discovery from an inverse feeling to his own. Fielding would have been gratified to have confirmed the observation by facts which never reached him. METASTASIO, in writing the ninth scene of the second act of his "Olympiad," found himself suddenly moved—shedding tears. The imagined sorrows had inspired real tears; and they afterwards proved contagious. Had our poet not perpetuated his surprise by an interesting sonnet, the circumstance had passed away with the emotion, as many such have. POPE could never read Priam's speech for the loss of his son, without tears, and frequently has been observed to weep over tender and melancholy passages. ALFIERI, the most energetic poet of modern times, having composed, without a pause, the whole of an act, noted in the margin —"Written under a paroxysm of enthusiasm, and while shedding a flood of tears." The impressions which the frame experiences in this state, leave deeper traces behind them than those of reverie. A circumstance accidentally preserved, has informed us of the tremors of DRYDEN, after having written that ode†, which, as he confessed, he had pursued without the power of quitting it; but these tremors were not unusual with him—for in the preface to his Tales, he tells us, that "in translating Homer he found greater pleasure than in Virgil; but it was not a pleasure without pain; the continual agitation of the spirits must needs be a weakener to any constitution, especially in age, and many pauses are required for refreshment betwixt the heats."

We find METASTASIO, like others of the brotherhood, susceptible of this state, complaining of his sufferings during the poetical æstus. "When I apply with attention, the nerves of my sensorium are put into a violent tumult; I grow as red as a drunkard, and am obliged to quit my work." When BUFFON was absorbed on a subject which presented great objections to his opinions, he felt his head burn, and saw his countenance flushed; and this was a warning for him to suspend his attention. GRAY could never compose voluntarily; his genius resembled the armed apparition in Shakespeare's master-tragedy. "He would not be commanded." When he wished to compose the Installation Ode, for a considerable time he felt himself without the power to begin it: a friend calling on him, GRAY flung open his door hastily, and in a hurried voice and tone, exclaiming in the first verse of that ode,

"Hence, avaunt! 'tis holy ground!"—

his friend started at the disordered appearance of the bard, whose orgasm had disturbed his very air and countenance.

Listen to one labouring with all the magic of the spell. Madame ROLAND has thus powerfully described the ideal presence in her first readings of Telemachus and Tasso:—"My respiration rose, I felt a rapid fire colouring my face, and my voice changing had betrayed my agitation. I was Eucharis for Telemachus, and Erminia for Tancred. However, during this perfect transformation, I did not yet think that I myself was anything, for any one: the whole had no connexion with myself. I sought for nothing around me; I was they; I saw only the objects which existed for them; it was a dream, without being awakened."

The description, which so calm and exquisite an investigator of taste and philosophy as our sweet and polished REYNOLDS has given of himself at one of these moments, is too rare not to be recorded in his own words. Alluding to the famous Transfiguration, our own RAFFAELLE says, "When I have stood looking at that picture from figure to figure, the eagerness, the spirit, the close unaffected attention of each figure to the principal action, my thoughts have carried me

* Richardson assembles a family about him, writing down what they said, seeing their very manner of saying, living with them as often and as long as he wills—with such a personal unity, that an ingenious lawyer once told me that he required no stronger evidence of a fact in any court of law than a circumstantial scene in Richardson.

† This famous and unparalleled ode was probably afterwards retouched; but Joseph Warton discovered in it the rapidity of the thoughts, and the glow and the expressiveness of the images; which are the certain marks of the *first sketch* of a master.

away, that I have forgot myself; and for that time might be looked upon as an enthusiastic madman; for I could really fancy the whole action was passing before my eyes."

The effect which the study of Plutarch's Illustrious Men produced on the mighty mind of ALFIERI, during a whole winter, while he lived as it were among the heroes of antiquity, he has himself described. ALFIERI wept and raved with grief and indignation that he was born under a government, which favoured no Roman heroes and sages. As often as he was struck with the great deeds of these great men, in his extreme agitation he rose from his seat as one possessed. The feeling of genius in ALFIERI was suppressed for more than twenty years, by the discouragement of his uncle: but as the natural temperament cannot be crushed out of the soul of genius, he was a poet without writing a single verse; and as a great poet, the ideal presence at times became ungovernable, verging to madness. In traversing the wilds of Arragon his emotions would certainly have given birth to poetry, could he have expressed himself in verse. It was a complete state of the imaginative existence, or this ideal presence; for he proceeded along the wilds of Arragon in a reverie, weeping and laughing by turns. He considered this as a folly, because it ended in nothing but in laughter and tears. He was not aware that he was then yielding to a demonstration, could he have judged of himself, that he possessed those dispositions of mind and that energy of passion which form the poetical character.

Genius creates by a single conception; the statuary conceives the statue at once, which he afterwards executes by the slow process of art; and the architect contrives a whole palace in an instant. In a single principle, opening as it were on a sudden to genius, a great and new system of things is discovered. It has happened, sometimes, that this single conception, rushing over the whole concentrated spirit, has agitated the frame convulsively. It comes like a whispered secret from Nature. When MALEBRANCHE first took up Descartes's Treatise on Man, the germ of his own subsequent philosophic system, such was his intense feeling, that a violent palpitation of the heart, more than once, obliged him to lay down the volume. When the first idea of the "Essay on the Arts and Sciences" rushed on the mind of ROUSSEAU, a feverish symptom in his nervous system approached to a slight delirium. Stopping under an oak, he wrote with a pencil the Prosopopeia of Fabricius.—"I still remember my solitary transport at the discovery of a philosophical argument against the doctrine of transubstantiation," exclaimed GIBBON in his Memoirs.

This quick sensibility of genius has suppressed the voice of poets in reciting their most pathetic passages.—THOMSON was so oppressed by a passage in Virgil or Milton when he attempted to read, that "his voice sunk in ill-articulated sounds from the bottom of his breast." The tremulous figures of the ancient Sibyl appear to have been viewed in the land of the Muses, by the energetic description which Paulus Jovius gives us, of the impetus and afflatus of one of the Italian improvvisatori, some of whom, I have heard from one present at a similar exhibition, have not degenerated in poetic inspiration, nor in its corporeal excitement. "His eyes fixed downwards, kindle, as he gives utterance to his effusions, the moist drops flow down his cheeks, the veins of his forehead swell, and wonderfully his learned ear, as it were, abstracted and intent, moderates each impulse of his flowing numbers.*"

This enthusiasm throws the man of genius amid Nature, into absorbing reveries when the senses of other men are overcome at the appearance of destruction; he continues to view only Nature herself. The mind of PLINY, to add one more chapter to his mighty scroll, sought Nature amidst the volcano in which he perished. VERNET was on board a ship in a raging tempest where all hope was given up. The astonished captain beheld the artist of genius, his pencil in his hand, in calm enthusiasm, sketching the terrible world of waters —studying the wave that was rising to devour him.

There is a tender enthusiasm in the elevated studies of antiquity. Then the ideal presence or the imaginative existence prevails, by its perpetual associations, or as the late Dr. Brown has perhaps more distinctly termed them, *suggestions*. "In contemplating antiquity, the mind itself becomes antique," was finely observed by Livy, long ere our philosophy of the mind existed as a system. This rapture, or sensation of deep study, has been described by one whose imagination had strayed into the occult learning of antiquity, and in the hymns of Orpheus, it seemed to him that he had lifted the veil from Nature. His feelings were associated with her loneliness. I translate his words. "When I took these dark mystical hymns into my hands, I appeared as it were to be descending into an abyss of the mysteries of venerable antiquity; at that moment, the world in silence and the stars and moon only, watching me." This enthusiasm is confirmed by Mr. Mathias, who applies this description to his own emotions on his first opening the manuscript volumes of the poet Gray on the philosophy of Plato; "and many a

* The passage is curious.—"Canenti defixi exardent oculi, sudores manant, frontis venæ contumescunt, et quod mirum est, eruditæ aures, tanquam alienæ et intentæ, omnem impetum profluentium numerorum exactissimâ ratione moderantur."

learned man," he adds, "will acknowledge as his own, the feelings of this animated scholar."

Amidst the monuments of great and departed nations, our imagination is touched by the grandeur of local impressions, and the vivid associations, or suggestions, of the manners, the arts, and the individuals, of a great people. The classical author of Anacharsis, when in Italy, would often stop as if overcome by his recollections. Amid camps, temples, circuses, hippodromes, and public and private edifices, he, as it were, held an interior converse with the manes of those who seemed hovering about the capital of the old world; as if he had been a citizen of ancient Rome, travelling in the modern. So men of genius have roved amid the awful ruins till the ideal presence has fondly built up the city anew, and have become Romans in the Rome of two thousand years past. Pomponius Lætus, who devoted his life to this study, was constantly seen wandering amidst the vestiges of this "throne of the world." There, in many a reverie, as his eye rested on the mutilated arch and the broken column, abstracted and immovable, he dropped tears in the ideal presence of Rome and of the Romans. Another enthusiast of this class was Bosius, who sought beneath Rome for another Rome, in those catacombs built by the early Christians, for their asylum and their sepulchre. His work of "Roma Sotteranea" is the production of a subterraneous life, passed in fervent and perilous labours. Taking with him a hermit's meal for the week, this new Pliny often descended into the bowels of the earth, by lamplight, clearing away the sand and ruins till a tomb broke forth, or an inscription became legible. Accompanied by some friend whom his enthusiasm had inspired with his own sympathy, here he dictated his notes, tracing the mouldering sculpture, and catching the fading picture. Thrown back into the primitive ages of Christianity, amid the local impressions, the historian of the Christian catacombs collected the memorials of an age and of a race, which were hidden beneath the earth.

The same enthusiasm surrounds the world of science with that creating imagination which has startled even men of science by its peculiar discoveries. Werner, the mineralogist, celebrated for his lectures, appears, by some accounts transmitted by his auditors, to have exercised this faculty. Werner often said that "he always depended on the muse for inspiration." His unwritten lecture was a reverie—till kindling in his progress, blending science and imagination in the grandeur of his conceptions, at times, as if he had gathered about him the very elements of nature, his spirit seemed to be hovering over the waters and the strata. With the same enthusiasm of science, Cuvier meditated on some bones, and some fragments of bones, which could not belong to any known class of the animal kingdom. The philosopher dwelt on these animal ruins till he constructed numerous species which had disappeared from the globe. This sublime naturalist has ascertained and classified the fossil remains of animals whose existence can no longer be traced in the records of mankind. His own language bears testimony to the imagination which carried him on through a career so strange and wonderful. "It is a rational object of ambition in the mind of man, to whom only a short space of time is allotted upon earth, to have the glory of restoring the history of *thousands of ages which preceded the existence of his race, and of thousands of animals that never were contemporaneous with his species.*" Philosophy becomes poetry, and science imagination, in the enthusiasm of genius. Even in the practical part of a science, painful to the operator himself, Mr. Abernethy has declared, and eloquently declared, that this enthusiasm is absolutely requisite. "We have need of enthusiasm, or some strong incentive, to induce us to spend our nights in study, and our days in the disgusting and health-destroying observation of human diseases, which alone can enable us to understand, alleviate, or remove them. On no other terms can we be considered as real students of our profession—to confer that which sick kings would fondly purchase with their diadem—that which wealth cannot purchase, nor state nor rank bestow—to alleviate the most insupportable of human afflictions." Such is the enthusiasm of the physiologist of genius, who elevates the demonstrations of anatomical inquiries by the cultivation of the intellectual faculties, connecting "man with the common Master of the universe."

This enthusiasm inconceivably fills the mind of genius in all great and solemn operations. It is an agitation amidst calmness, and is required not only in the fine arts, but wherever a great and continued exertion of the soul must be employed. The great ancients, who, if they were not always philosophers, were always men of genius, saw, or imagined they saw, a divinity within the man. This enthusiasm is alike experienced in the silence of study and amidst the roar of cannon, in painting a picture, or in scaling a rampart. View De Thou, the historian, after his morning prayers, imploring the Divinity to purify his heart from partiality and hatred, and to open his spirit in developing the truth, amidst the contending factions of his times; and Haydn, employed in his "Creation," earnestly addressing the Creator ere he struck his instrument. In moments like these, man becomes a perfect unity—one thought and one act, abstracted from all other thoughts and all other acts. This intensity of the mind

was felt by GRAY in his loftiest excursions, and is perhaps the same power which impels the villager, when, to overcome his rivals in a contest for leaping, he retires back some steps, collects all exertion into his mind, and clears the eventful bound. One of our admirals in the reign of Elizabeth held as a maxim, that a height of passion, amounting to frenzy, was necessary to qualify a man for the command of a fleet; and NELSON, decorated by all his honours about him, on the day of battle, at the sight of those emblems of glory emulated himself. This enthusiasm was necessary for his genius, and made it effective.

But this enthusiasm, prolonged as it often has been by the operation of the imaginative existence, becomes a state of perturbed feeling, and can only be distinguished from a disordered intellect by the power of volition possessed by a sound mind of withdrawing from the ideal world into the world of sense. It is but a step which may carry us from the wanderings of fancy into the aberrations of delirium. The endurance of attention, even in minds of the highest order, is limited by a law of nature; and when thinking is goaded on to exhaustion, confusion of ideas ensues, as straining any one of our limbs by excessive exertion produces tremor and torpor.

> "With curious art the brain too finely wrought
> Preys on herself and is destroyed by Thought;
> Constant attention wears the active mind,
> Blots out her powers, and leaves a blank behind—
> The greatest genius to this fate may bow."

Even minds less susceptible than high genius may become overpowered by their imagination. Often, in the deep silence around us, we seek to relieve ourselves by some voluntary noise or action which may direct our attention to an exterior object, and bring us back to the world, which we had, as it were, left behind us. The circumstance is sufficiently familiar; as well as another; that whenever we are absorbed in profound contemplation, a startling noise scatters the spirits, and painfully agitates the whole frame. The nerves are then in a state of the utmost relaxation. There may be an agony in thought which only deep thinkers experience. The terrible effect of metaphysical studies on BEATTIE has been told by himself. "Since the Essay on Truth was printed in quarto, I have never *dared* to read it over. I durst not even read the sheets to see whether there were any errors in the print, and was obliged to get a friend to do that office for me. These studies came in time to have dreadful effects upon my nervous system; and I cannot read what I then wrote without some degree of horror, because it recalls to my mind the horrors that I have sometimes felt after passing a long evening in those severe studies."

GOLDONI, after a rash exertion of writing sixteen plays in a year, confesses he paid the penalty of the folly. He flew to Genoa, leading a life of delicious vacuity. To pass the day without doing anything, was all the enjoyment he was now capable of feeling. But long after he said, "I felt at that time, and have ever since continued to feel, the consequence of that exhaustion of spirits I sustained in composing my sixteen comedies."

The enthusiasm of study was experienced by POPE in his self-education, and once it clouded over his fine intellect. It was the severity of his application which distorted his body; and he then partook of a calamity incidental to the family of genius, for he sunk into that state of exhaustion which SMOLLETT experienced during half a year, called a *coma vigil*, an affection of the brain, where the principle of life is so reduced, that all external objects appear to be passing in a dream. BOERHAAVE has related of himself, that having imprudently indulged in intense thought on a particular subject, he did not close his eyes for six weeks after; and TISSOT, in his work on the health of men of letters, abounds in similar cases, where a complete stupor has affected the unhappy student for a period of six months.

Assuredly the finest geniuses have not always the power to withdraw themselves from that intensely interesting train of ideas, which we have shown has not been removed from about them by even the violent stimuli of exterior objects; and the scenical illusion which then occurs, has been called the *hallucinatio studiosa*, or false ideas in reverie. Such was the state in which PETRARCH found himself, in that minute narrative of a vision in which Laura appeared to him; and TASSO, in the lofty conversations he held with a spirit that glided towards him on the beams of the sun. In this state was MALEBRANCHE listening to the voice of God within him; and Lord HERBERT, when, to know whether he should publish his book, he threw himself on his knees, and interrogated the Deity in the stillness of the sky. And thus PASCAL started at times at a fiery gulf opening by his side. SPINELLO having painted the fall of the rebellious angels, had so strongly imagined the illusion, and more particularly the terrible features of Lucifer, that he was himself struck with such horror as to have been long afflicted with the presence of the demon to which his genius had given birth. The influence of the same ideal presence operated on the religious painter ANGELONI, who could never represent the sufferings of Jesus without his eyes overflowing with tears. DESCARTES, when young, and in a country seclusion, his brain exhausted with meditation, and his imagination heated to excess, heard a voice in the air which called him to pursue the search

of truth; nor did he doubt the vision, and this delirious dreaming of genius charmed him even in his after-studies. Our COLLINS and COWPER were often thrown into that extraordinary state of mind, when the ideal presence converts us into visionaries; and their illusions were as strong as SWEDENBORG'S, who saw a terrestrial heaven in the glittering streets of his New Jerusalem; or JACOB BEHMEN'S, who listened to a celestial voice till he beheld the apparition of an angel; or CARDAN'S, when he so carefully observed a number of little armed men at his feet; or BENVENUTO CELLINI'S, whose vivid imagination and glorious egotism so frequently contemplated "a resplendent light hovering over his shadow."

Such minds identified themselves with their visions! If we pass them over by asserting that they were insane, we are only cutting the knot which we cannot untie. We have no right to deny what some maintain, that a sympathy of the corporeal with the incorporeal nature of man, his imaginative with his physical existence, is an excitement which appears to have been experienced by persons of a peculiar organisation, and which metaphysicians in despair must resign to the speculations of enthusiasts themselves, though metaphysicians reason about phenomena far removed from the perceptions of the eye. The historian of the mind cannot omit this fact, unquestionable, however incomprehensible. According to our own conceptions, this state must produce a strange mysterious personage: a concentration of a human being within himself, endowed with inward eyes, ears which listen to interior sounds, and invisible hands touching impalpable objects, for whatever they act or however they are acted on, as far as respects themselves all must have passed within their own minds. The Platonic Dr. MORE flattered himself, that he was an enthusiast without enthusiasm, which seems but a suspicious state of convalescence. "I must ingenuously confess," he says, "that I have a natural touch of enthusiasm in my complexion, but such as I thank God was ever governable enough, and have found at length perfectly subduable. In virtue of which victory I know better what is in enthusiasts than they themselves; and therefore, was able to write with life and judgment, and shall, I hope, contribute not a little to the peace and quiet of this kingdom thereby." Thus far one of its votaries; and all that he vaunts to have acquired by this mysterious faculty of enthusiasm is the having rendered it "at length perfectly subduable." Yet those who have written on "Mystical devotion," have declared, that "It is a sublime state of mind to which whole sects have aspired, and some individuals appear to have attained*." The histories of great visionaries, were they correctly detailed, would probably prove how their delusions consisted of the ocular *spectra* of their brain and the accelerated sensations of their nerves. BAYLE has conjured up an amusing theory of apparitions, to show that HOBBES, who was subject to occasional terrors, might fear that a certain combination of atoms agitating his brain might so disorder his mind as to expose him to spectral visions; and so being very timid, and distrusting his own imagination, he was averse at times to be left alone. Apparitions often happen in dreams, but they may happen to a man when awake, for reading and hearing of them would revive their images, and these images might play even an incredulous philosopher some unlucky trick.

But men of genius whose enthusiasm has not been past recovery, have experienced this extraordinary state of the mind, in those exhaustions of study to which they unquestionably are subject. Tissot, on "The Health of Men of Letters," has produced a terrifying number of cases. They see and hear what none but themselves do. Genius thrown into this peculiar state has produced some noble effusions. KOTZEBUE was once absorbed in hypochondriacal melancholy, and appears to have meditated on self-destruction; but it happened, that he preserved his habit of dramatic composition, and produced one of his most energetic dramas—that of "Misanthropy and Repentance." He tells us, that he had never experienced such a rapid flow of thoughts and images, and he believed, what a physiological history would perhaps show, that there are some maladies, those of the brain and the nerves, which actually stretch the powers of the mind beyond their usual reach. It is the more vivid world of ideal existence!

But what is more evident, men of the finest genius have experienced these hallucinations in society acting on their moral habits. They have insulated the mind. With them ideas have become realities, and suspicions certainties; while events have been noted down as seen and heard, which in truth had never occurred. ROUSSEAU'S phantoms scarcely ever quitted him for a day. BARRY imagined that he was invisibly persecuted by the Royal Academy, who had even spirited up a gang of housebreakers. The vivid memoirs of ALFIERI will authenticate what DONNE, who himself had suffered from them, calls, "these eclipses, sudden offuscations and darkening of the senses." Too often the man of genius, with a vast and solitary power, darkens the scene of life; he builds a pyramid between himself and the sun. Mocking at the expedients by which society has contrived to

* CHARLES BUTLER has drawn up a sensible essay on "Mystical Devotion." He was a Roman Catholic. NORRIS, and Dr. HENRY MORE, and Bishop BERKLEY, may be consulted by the curious.

protect its feebleness, he would break down the institutions from which he has shrunk away in the loneliness of his feelings. Such is the insulating intellect to which some of the most elevated spirits have been reduced. To imbue ourselves with the genius of their works, even to think of them, is an awful thing! In nature their existence is a solecism, as their genius is a paradox; for their crimes seem to be without guilt, their curses have kindness in them, and if they afflict mankind it is in sorrow.

Yet what less than enthusiasm is the purchase-price of high passion and invention? Perhaps never has there been a man of genius of this rare cast, who has not betrayed the ebullitions of imagination in some outward action, at that period when the illusions of life are more real to genius than its realities. There is a *fata morgana*, that throws into the air a pictured land, and the deceived eye trusts till the visionary shadows glide away. "I have dreamt of a golden land," exclaimed FUSELI, "and solicit in vain for the barge which is to carry me to its shore." A slight derangement of our accustomed habits, a little perturbation of the faculties, and a romantic tinge on the feelings, give no indifferent promise of genius; of that generous temper which knowing nothing of the baseness of mankind, with indefinite views carries on some glorious design to charm the world or to make it happier. Often we hear, from the confessions of men of genius, of their having in youth indulged the most elevating and the most chimerical projects; and if age ridicule thy imaginative existence, be assured that it is the decline of its genius. That virtuous and tender enthusiast, FENELON, in his early youth, troubled his friends with a classical and religious reverie. He was on the point of quitting them to restore the independence of Greece, with the piety of a missionary, and with the taste of a classical antiquary. The Peloponnesus opened to him the church of Corinth where St. Paul preached, the Piræus where Socrates conversed; while the latent poet was to pluck laurels from Delphi, and rove amidst the amenities of Tempe. Such was the influence of the ideal presence; and barren will be his imagination, and luckless his fortune, who, claiming the honours of genius, has never been touched by such a temporary delirium.

To this enthusiasm, and to this alone, can we attribute the self-immolation of men of genius. Mighty and laborious works have been pursued, as a forlorn hope, at the certain destruction of the fortune of the individual. Vast labours attest the enthusiasm which accompanied their progress. Such men have sealed their works with their blood: they have silently borne the pangs of disease; they have barred themselves from the pursuits of fortune; they have torn themselves away from all they loved in life, patiently suffering these self-denials, to escape from interruptions and impediments to their studies. Martyrs of literature and art, they behold in their solitude the halo of immortality over their studious heads—that fame which is "a life beyond life." VAN HELMONT, in his library and his laboratory, preferred their busy solitude to the honours and the invitations of Rodolphus II., there writing down what he daily experienced during thirty years; nor would the enthusiast yield up to the emperor one of those golden and visionary days! MILTON would not desist from proceeding with one of his works, although warned by the physician of the certain loss of his sight. He declared he preferred his duty to his eyes, and doubtless his fame to his comfort. ANTHONY WOOD, to preserve the lives of others, voluntarily resigned his own to cloistered studies; nor did the literary passion desert him in his last moments, when with his dying hands the hermit of literature still grasped his beloved papers, and his last mortal thoughts dwelt on his Athenæ Oxonienses. MORERI, the founder of our great biographical collections, conceived the design with such enthusiasm, and found such seduction in the labour, that he willingly withdrew from the popular celebrity he had acquired as a preacher, and the preferment which a minister of state, in whose house he resided, would have opened to his views. After the first edition of his Historical Dictionary, he had nothing so much at heart as its improvement. His unyielding application was converting labour into death; but collecting his last renovated vigour, with his dying hands he gave the volume to the world, though he did not live to witness even its publication. All objects in life appeared mean to him, compared with that exalted delight of addressing, to the literary men of his age, the history of their brothers. Such are the men, as BACON says of himself, who are "the servants of posterity,"

> "Who scorn delights, and live laborious days!"

The same enthusiasm inspires the pupils of art consumed by their own ardour. The young and classical sculptor who raised the statue of Charles II., placed in the centre of the Royal Exchange, was, in the midst of his work, advised by his medical friends to desist; for the energy of his labour, with the strong excitement of his feelings, already had made fatal inroads in his constitution: but he was willing, he said, to die at the foot of his statue. The statue was raised, and the young sculptor, with the shining eye and hectic flush of consumption, beheld it there—returned home—and died. DROUAIS, a pupil of David, the French painter, was a youth of fortune, but the solitary

pleasure of his youth was his devotion to Raphael; he was at his studies from four in the morning till night. "Painting or nothing!" was the cry of this enthusiast of elegance; "First fame, then amusement," was another. His sensibility was great as his enthusiasm; and he cut in pieces the picture for which David declared he would inevitably obtain the prize. "I have had my reward in your approbation; but next year I shall feel more certain of deserving it," was the reply of this young enthusiast. Afterwards he astonished Paris with his Marius; but while engaged on a subject which he could never quit, the principle of life itself was drying up in his veins. HENRY HEADLEY and KIRKE WHITE were the early victims of the enthusiasm of study, and are mourned by the few who are organised like themselves.

"'Twas thine own genius gave the final blow,
And help'd to plant the wound that laid thee low;
So the struck eagle, stretch'd upon the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,
View'd his own feather on the fatal dart,
And wing'd the shaft that quiver'd in his heart;
Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel
He nursed the pinion which impell'd the steel,
While the same plumage that had warm'd his nest,
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast."

One of our former great students, when reduced in health by excessive study, was entreated to abandon it, and in the scholastic language of the day, not to *perdere substantiam propter accidentia*. With a smile the martyr of study repeated a verse from Juvenal:

Nec propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.
No! not for life lose that for which I live!

Thus the shadow of death falls among those who are existing with more than life about them. Yet "there is no celebrity for the artist," said GESNER, "if the love of his own art do not become a vehement passion; if the hours he employs to cultivate it be not for him the most delicious ones of his life; if study become not his true existence and his first happiness; if the society of his brothers in art be not that which most pleases him; if even in the night-time the ideas of his art do not occupy his vigils or his dreams; if in the morning he fly not to his work, impatient to recommence what he left unfinished. These are the marks of him who labours for true glory and posterity; but if he seek only to please the taste of his age, his works will not kindle the desires nor touch the hearts of those who love the arts and the artists."

Unaccompanied by enthusiasm, genius will produce nothing but uninteresting works of art; not a work of art resembling the dove of Archytas, which beautiful piece of mechanism, while other artists beheld flying, no one could frame such another dove to meet it in the air. Enthusiasm is that secret and harmonious spirit which hovers over the production of genius, throwing the reader of a book, or the spectator of a statue, into the very ideal presence whence these works have really originated. A great work always leaves us in a state of musing.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the Jealousy of Genius.—Jealousy often proportioned to the degree of genius.—A perpetual fever among Authors and Artists.—Instances of its incredible excess among brothers and benefactors.—Of a peculiar species, where the fever consumes the sufferer, without its malignancy.

JEALOUSY, long supposed to be the offspring of little minds, is not, however, confined to them. In the literary republic, the passion fiercely rages among the senators, as well as among the people. In that curious self-description which LINNÆUS comprised in a single page, written with the precision of a naturalist, that great man discovered that his constitution was liable to be afflicted with jealousy. Literary jealousy seems often proportioned to the degree of genius, and the shadowy and equivocal claims of literary honour is the real cause of this terrible fear; for in cases where the object is more palpable and definite than intellectual excellence, jealousy does not appear so strongly to affect the claimant for admiration. The most beautiful woman, in the season of beauty, is more haughty than jealous; she rarely encounters a rival; and while her claims exist, who can contend with a fine feature or a dissolving glance? But a man of genius has no other existence than in the opinion of the world; a divided empire would obscure him, and a contested one might prove his annihilation.

The lives of authors and artists exhibit a most painful disease in that jealousy which is the perpetual fever of their existence. Why does PLATO never mention XENOPHON, and why does XENOPHON inveigh against PLATO, studiously collecting every little rumour which may detract from his fame. They wrote on the same subject! The studied affectation of ARISTOTLE, to differ from the doctrines of his master PLATO while he was following them, led him into ambiguities and contradictions which have been remarked. The two fathers of our poetry, CHAUCER and GOWER, suffered their friendship to be interrupted towards the close of their lives. Chaucer bitterly reflects on his friend for the indelicacy of some of his tales: "Of all such *cursed stories* I say fy!" and GOWER, evidently in return, erased those verses in praise of his friend which he had inserted in the first copy of his "Confessio Amantis." Why

did CORNEILLE, tottering to the grave, when RACINE consulted him on his first tragedy, advise the author never to write another? Why does VOLTAIRE continually detract from the sublimity of Corneille, the sweetness of Racine, and the fire of Crebillon? Why did DRYDEN never speak of OTWAY with kindness but when in his grave, then acknowledging that Otway excelled him in the pathetic? Why did LEIBNITZ speak slightingly of LOCKE'S Essay, and meditate on nothing less than the complete overthrow of NEWTON'S system? Why, when Boccaccio sent to PETRARCH a copy of DANTE, declaring that the work was like a first light which had illuminated his mind, did Petrarch coldly observe that he had not been anxious to inquire after it, for intending himself to compose in the vernacular idiom, he had no wish to be considered as a plagiary? and he only allows Dante's superiority from having written in the vulgar idiom, which he did not consider an enviable merit. Thus frigidly Petrarch could behold the solitary Ætna before him, in the "Inferno," while he shrunk into himself with the painful consciousness of the existence of another poet, obscuring his own majesty. It is curious to observe Lord SHAFTESBURY treating with the most acrimonious contempt the great writers of his own times, Cowley, Dryden, Addison, and Prior. We cannot imagine that his lordship was so entirely destitute of every feeling of wit and genius as would appear by this damnatory criticism on all the wit and genius of his age. It is not, indeed, difficult to comprehend a different motive for this extravagant censure in the jealousy, which even a great writer often experiences when he comes in contact with his living rivals, and hardily, if not impudently, practises those arts of critical detraction to raise a moment's delusion, which can gratify no one but himself.

The moral sense has often been found too weak to temper the malignancy of literary jealousy, and has impelled some men of genius to an incredible excess. A memorable example offers in the history of the two brothers, Dr. WILLIAM and JOHN HUNTER, both great characters fitted to be rivals; but Nature, it was imagined, in the tenderness of blood, had placed a bar to rivalry. John, without any determined pursuit in his youth, was received by his brother at the height of his celebrity; the doctor initiated him into his school; they performed their experiments together; and William Hunter was the first to announce to the world the great genius of his brother. After this close connexion in all their studies and discoveries, Dr. William Hunter published his magnificent work—the proud favourite of his heart, the assertor of his fame. Was it credible that the genius of the celebrated anatomist, which had been nursed under the wing of his brother, should turn on that wing to clip it? John Hunter put in his claim to the chief discovery; it was answered by his brother. The Royal Society, to whom they appealed, concealed the documents of this unnatural feud. The blow was felt, and the jealousy of literary honour for ever separated the brothers—the brothers of genius.

Such, too, was the jealousy which separated Agostino and Annibal CARRACCI, whom their cousin Ludovico for so many years had attempted to unite, and who, during the time their academy existed, worked together, combining their separate powers. The learning and the philosophy of Agostino assisted the invention of the master genius Annibal; but Annibal was jealous of the more literary and poetical character of Agostino, and, by his sarcastic humour, frequently mortified his learned brother. Alike great artists, when once employed on the same work, Agostino was thought to have excelled his brother. Annibal, sullen and scornful, immediately broke with him; and their patron, Cardinal Farnese, was compelled to separate the brothers. Their fate is striking; Agostino, divided from his brother Annibal, sunk into dejection and melancholy, and perished by a premature death, while Annibal closed his days not long after in a state of distraction. The brothers of Nature and Art could not live together, and could not live separate.

The history of artists abounds with instances of jealousy, perhaps more than that of any other class of men of genius. HUDSON, the master of REYNOLDS, could not endure the sight of his rising pupil, and would not suffer him to conclude the term of his apprenticeship; while even the mild and elegant Reynolds himself became so jealous of WILSON, that he took every opportunity of depreciating his singular excellence. Stung by the madness of jealousy, BARRY one day addressing Sir Joshua on his lectures, burst out, "Such poor flimsy stuff as your Discourses!" clenching his fist in the agony of the convulsion. After the death of the great artist, BARRY bestowed on him the most ardent eulogium, and deeply grieved over the past. But the race of genius born too "near the sun," have found their increased sensibility flame into crimes of a deeper dye—crimes attesting the treachery and the violence of the professors of an art, which, it appears, in softening the souls of others, does not necessarily mollify those of the artists themselves. The dreadful story of ANDREA DEL CASTAGNO seems not doubtful. Having been taught the discovery of painting in oil by Domenico Venetiano, yet, still envious of the merit of the generous friend who had confided that great secret to him, Andrea with his own hand secretly assassinated him, that he might

remain without a rival. The horror of his crime only appeared in his confession on his death-bed. DOMENICHINO seems to have been poisoned for the preference he obtained over the Neapolitan artists, which raised them to a man against him, and reduced him to the necessity of preparing his food with his own hand. On his last return to Naples, Passeri says, "*Non fu mai più veduto da buon occhio da quelli Napoletani: e li Pittori lo detestavano perchè egli era ritornato—morì con qualche sospetto di veleno, e questo non è inverisimile perchè l'interesso è un perfido tiranno.*" So that the Neapolitans honoured Genius at Naples by poison, which they might have forgotten had it flourished at Rome. The famous cartoon of the battle of Pisa, a work of Michael Angelo, which he produced in a glorious competition with the Homer of painting, Leonardo da Vinci, and in which he had struck out the idea of a new style, is only known by a print which has preserved the wonderful composition; for the original, it is said, was cut into pieces by the mad jealousy of BACCIO BANDINELLI, whose whole life was made miserable by his consciousness of a superior rival.

In the jealousy of genius, however, there is a peculiar case where the fever silently consumes the sufferer, without possessing the malignant character of the disease. Even the gentlest temper declines under its slow wastings, and this infection may happen among dear friends, whenever a man of genius loses that self-opinion which animates his solitary labours and constitutes his happiness. Perhaps when at the height of his class, he suddenly views himself eclipsed by another genius—and that genius his friend! This is the jealousy not of hatred, but of despair. Churchill observed the feeling, but probably included in it a greater degree of malignancy than I would now describe.

> "Envy which turns pale,
> And sickens even if a friend prevail."

SWIFT, in that curious poem on his own death, said of POPE, that

> "—— He can in one couplet fix
> More sense than I can do in six."

The Dean, perhaps, is not quite serious, but probably is in the next lines:

> "It gives me such a jealous fit,
> I cry 'Pox take him and his wit.'"

If the reader pursue this hint throughout the poem, these compliments to his friends, always at his own expense, exhibit a singular mixture of the sensibility and the frankness of true genius, which Swift himself has honestly confessed.

> "What poet would not grieve to see
> His brother write as well as he?"

ADDISON experienced this painful and mixed emotion in his intercourse with POPE, to whose rising celebrity he soon became too jealously alive. It was more tenderly, but not less keenly, felt by the Spanish artist CASTILLO, a man distinguished by every amiable disposition. He was the great painter of Seville; but when some of his nephew MURILLO's paintings were shown to him, he stood in meek astonishment before them, and turning away, he exclaimed with a sigh, *Yà murio Castillo!* Castillo is no more! Returning home, the stricken genius relinquished his pencil, and pined away in hopelessness. The same occurrence happened to PIETRO PERUGINO, the master of Raphael, whose general character as a painter was so entirely eclipsed by his far renowned scholar; yet, while his real excellences in the ease of his attitudes and the mild grace of his female countenances have been passed over, it is probable that Raphael himself might have caught from them his first feelings of ideal beauty.

CHAPTER XIV.

Want of mutual esteem, among men of genius, often originates in a deficiency of analogous ideas.—It is not always envy or jealousy which induces men of genius to undervalue each other.

AMONG men of genius, that want of mutual esteem, usually attributed to envy or jealousy, often originates in a deficiency of analogous ideas, or of sympathy, in the parties. On this principle several curious phenomena in the history of genius may be explained.

Every man of genius has a manner of his own; a mode of thinking and a habit of style, and usually decides on a work as it approximates or varies from his own. When one great author depreciates another, his depreciation has often no worse source than his own taste. The witty Cowley despised the natural Chaucer; the austere classical Boileau the rough sublimity of Crébillon; the refining Marivaux the familiar Molière. Fielding ridiculed Richardson, whose manner so strongly contrasted with his own; and Richardson contemned Fielding, and declared he would not last. Cumberland escaped a fit of unforgiveness, not living to read his own character by Bishop Watson, whose logical head tried the lighter elegancies of that polished man by his own nervous genius, destitute of the beautiful in taste. There was no envy in the breast of Johnson when he advised Mrs. Thrale not to purchase Gray's Letters, as trifling and dull, no more than there was in Gray himself when he sunk the poetical character of Shenstone, and debased his simplicity and purity of feeling, by an image of ludicrous contempt. I have heard that WILKES, a mere wit and elegant scholar, used to treat

GIBBON as a mere bookmaker; and applied to that philosophical historian the verse by which Voltaire described, with so much caustic facetiousness, the genius of the Abbé Trablet:

"Il a compilé, compilé, compilé."

The deficient sympathy in these men of genius for modes of feeling opposite to their own was the real cause of their opinions; and thus it happens that even superior genius is so often liable to be unjust and false in its decisions.

The same principle operates still more strikingly in the remarkable contempt of men of genius for those pursuits which require talents distinct from their own, and a cast of mind thrown by nature into another mould. Hence we must not be surprised at the poetical antipathies of Selden and Locke, as well as Longuerue and Buffon. Newton called poetry "ingenious nonsense." On the other side, poets undervalue the pursuits of the antiquary, the naturalist, and the metaphysician, forming their estimate by their own favourite scale of imagination. As we can only understand in the degree we comprehend, and feel in the degree in which we sympathise, we may be sure that in both these cases the parties will be found altogether deficient in those qualities of genius which constitute the excellence of the other. To this cause, rather than to the one the friends of MICKLE ascribed to ADAM SMITH, namely, a personal dislike to the poet, may we place the severe mortification which the unfortunate translator of Camoens suffered from the person to whom he dedicated "The Lusiad." This Duke of Buccleugh was the pupil of the great political economist, and so little valued an epic poem, that his grace had not even the curiosity to open the leaves of the presentation copy.

A professor of polite literature condemned the study of botany, as adapted to mediocrity of talent, and only demanding patience; but LINNÆUS showed how a man of genius becomes a creator even in a science which seems to depend only on order and method. It will not be a question with some whether a man must be endowed with the energy and aptitude of genius, to excel in antiquarianism, in natural history, and similar pursuits. The prejudices raised against the claims of such to the honours of genius have probably arisen from the secluded nature of their pursuits, and the little knowledge which the men of wit and imagination possess of these persons, who live in a society of their own. On this subject a very curious circumstance has been revealed respecting PEIRESC, whose enthusiasm for science was long felt throughout Europe. His name was known in every country, and his death was lamented in forty languages; yet was this great literary character unknown to several men of genius in his own country; Rochefoucauld declared he had never heard of his name, and Malherbe wondered why his death created so universal a sensation.

Madame DE STAEL was an experienced observer of the habits of the literary character, and she has remarked how one student usually revolts from the other when *their occupations are different*, because they are a reciprocal annoyance. The scholar has nothing to say to the poet, the poet to the naturalist; and even among men of science, those who are differently occupied avoid each other, taking little interest in what is out of their own circle. Thus we see the classes of literature, like the planets, revolving as distinct worlds; and it would not be less absurd for the inhabitants of Venus to treat with contempt the powers and faculties of those of Jupiter, than it is for the men of wit and imagination, those of the men of knowledge and curiosity. The wits are incapable of exerting the peculiar qualities which give a real value to these pursuits, and therefore they must remain ignorant of their nature and their result.

It is not then always envy or jealousy which induces men of genius to undervalue each other; the want of sympathy will sufficiently account for the want of judgment. Suppose NEWTON, QUINAULT, and MACHIAVEL accidentally meeting together, and unknown to each other, would they not soon have desisted from the vain attempt of communicating their ideas? The philosopher would have condemned the poet of the Graces as an intolerable trifler, and the author of "The Prince" as a dark political spy. Machiavel would have conceived Newton to be a dreamer among the stars, and a mere almanack-maker among men; and the other a rhymer, nauseously *doucereux*. Quinault might have imagined that he was seated between two madmen. Having annoyed each other for some time, they would have relieved their ennui by reciprocal contempt, and each have parted with a determination to avoid henceforward two such disagreeable companions.

CHAPTER XV.

Self-praise of genius.—The love of praise instinctive in the nature of genius.—A high opinion of themselves necessary for their great designs.—The Ancients openly claimed their own praise.—And several Moderns.—An author knows more of his merits than his readers—And less of his defects.—Authors versatile in their admiration and their malignity.

VANITY, egotism, a strong sense of their own sufficiency, form another accusation against men of genius; but the complexion of self-praise must alter with the occasion; for the simplicity of truth may appear vanity, and the consciousness of

superiority seem envy—to Mediocrity. It is we who do nothing, and cannot even imagine anything to be done, who are so much displeased with self-lauding, self-love, self-independence, self-admiration, which with the man of genius may often be nothing but an ostensible modification of the passion of glory.

He who exults in himself is at least in earnest; but he who refuses to receive that praise in public for which he has devoted so much labour in his privacy, is not: for he is compelled to suppress the very instinct of his nature. We censure no man for loving fame, but only for showing us how much he is possessed by the passion: thus we allow him to create the appetite, but we deny him its aliment. Our effeminate minds are the willing dupes of what is called the modesty of genius, or, as it has been termed, "the polished reserve of modern times;" and this from the selfish principle that it serves at least to keep out of the company its painful pre-eminence. But this "polished reserve," like something as fashionable, the ladies' rouge, at first appearing with rather too much colour, will in the heat of an evening die away till the true complexion come out. What subterfuges are resorted to by these pretended modest men of genius, to extort that praise from their private circle which is thus openly denied them! They have been taken by surprise enlarging their own panegyric, which might rival Pliny's on Trajan, for care and copiousness; or impudently veiling themselves with the transparency of a third person; or never prefixing their name to the volume, which they would not easily forgive a friend to pass unnoticed.

Self-love is a principle of action; but among no class of human beings has nature so profusely distributed this principle of life and action as through the whole sensitive family of genius. It reaches even to a feminine susceptibility. The love of praise is instinctive in their nature. Praise with them is the evidence of the past and the pledge of the future. The generous qualities and the virtues of a man of genius are really produced by the applause conferred on him. "To him whom the world admires, the happiness of the world must be dear," said Madame De Stael. Romney, the painter, held as a maxim that every diffident artist required "almost a daily portion of cheering applause." How often do such find their powers paralysed by the depression of confidence or the appearance of neglect! When the North American Indians, amid their circle, chant their gods and their heroes, the honest savages laud the living worthies, as well as their departed; and when, as we are told, an auditor hears the shout of his own name, he answers by a cry of pleasure and of pride. The savage and the man of genius are here true to nature, but pleasure and pride in his own name must raise no emotion in the breast of genius amidst a polished circle. To bring himself down to their usual mediocrity, he must start at an expression of regard, and turn away even from one of his own votaries. Madame De Stäel, an exquisite judge of the feelings of the literary character, was aware of this change, which has rather occurred in our manners than in men of genius themselves. "Envy," says that eloquent writer, "among the Greeks, existed sometimes between rivals; it has now passed to the spectators; and by a strange singularity the mass of men are jealous of the efforts which are tried to add to their pleasures or to merit their approbation."

But this, it seems, is not always the case with men of genius, since the accusation we are noticing has been so often reiterated. Take from some that supreme confidence in themselves, that pride of exultation, and you crush the germ of their excellence. Many vast designs must have perished in the conception, had not their authors breathed this vital air of self-delight, this creative spirit, so operative in great undertakings. We have recently seen this principle in the literary character unfold itself in the life of the late Bishop of Landaff. Whatever he did, he felt it was done as a master; whatever he wrote, it was, as he once declared, the best work on the subject yet written. With this feeling he emulated Cicero in retirement or in action. "When I am dead, you will not soon meet with another John Hunter," said the great anatomist to one of his garrulous friends. An apology is formed by his biographer for relating the fact, but the weakness is only in the apology. When Hogarth was engaged in his work of the *Marriage à-la-Mode*, he said to Reynolds, "I shall very soon gratify the world with such a sight as they have never seen equalled."—"One of his foibles," adds Northcote, "it is well known, was the excessive high opinion he had of his own abilities." So pronounced Northcote, who had not an atom of his genius. Was it a *foible* in Hogarth to cast the glove, when he always more than redeemed the pledge? Corneille has given a very noble full-length of the sublime egotism which accompanied him through life*; but I doubt, if we had any such author in the present day, whether he would dare to be so just to himself, and so hardy to the public. The self-praise of Buffon at least equalled his genius; and the inscription beneath his statue in the library of the Jardin des Plantes, which I have been told was raised to him in his lifetime, exceeds all panegyric;—it places him

* See it versified in Curiosities of Literature.

alone in nature, as the first and the last interpreter of her works. He said of the great geniuses of modern ages, that "there were not more than five; Newton, Bacon, Leibnitz, Montesquieu, and Myself." With this spirit he conceived and terminated his great works, and sat in patient meditation at his desk for half a century, till all Europe, even in a state of war, bowed to the modern Pliny.

Nor is the vanity of Buffon, and Voltaire, and Rousseau purely national; for men of genius in all ages have expressed a consciousness of the internal force of genius. No one felt this self-exultation more potent than our HOBBES; who has indeed, in his controversy with Wallis, asserted that there may be nothing more just than self-commendation *. There is a curious passage in the Purgatorio of DANTE, where, describing the transitory nature of literary fame, and the variableness of human opinion, the poet alludes with confidence to his own future greatness. Of two authors of the name of Guido, the one having eclipsed the other, the poet writes:—

Così ha tolto l'uno all' altro Guido
La gloria della lingua; e *forse è nato*
Chi l' uno e l' altro caccerà di nido.

Thus has one Guido from the other snatch'd
The letter'd pride; *and he perhaps is born*
Who shall drive either from their nest †.

DE THOU, one of the most noble-minded of historians, in the Memoirs of his own life, composed in the third person, has surprised and somewhat puzzled the critics, by that frequent distribution of self-commendation which they knew not how to reconcile with the modesty and gravity with which the President was so amply endowed. After his great and solemn labour, amidst the injustice of his persecutors, this eminent man had sufficient experience of his real worth to assert it. KEPLER, amidst his sublime discoveries, looks down like a superior being on other men. He breaks forth in glory and daring egotism: "I dare insult mankind by confessing that I am he who has turned science to advantage. If I am pardoned, I shall rejoice; if blamed, I shall endure it. The die is cast; I have written this book, and whether it be read by posterity or by my contemporaries is of no consequence; it may well wait for a reader during one century, when God himself during six thousand years has not sent an observer like myself." He truly predicts that "his discoveries would be verified in succeeding ages;" and prefers his own glory to the possession of the electorate of Saxony. It was this solitary majesty, this futurity of their genius, which hovered over the sleepless pillow of Bacon, of Newton, and of Montesquieu; of Ben Jonson, of Milton, and Corneille; and of Michael Angelo. Such men anticipate their contemporaries; they know they are creators, long before they are hailed as such by the tardy consent of the public. These men stand on Pisgah heights, and for them the sun shines on a land which none yet view but themselves.

There is an admirable essay in Plutarch, "On the manner by which we may praise ourselves without exciting envy in others." The sage seems to consider self-praise as a kind of illustrious impudence, and has one very striking image: he compares these eulogists to famished persons, who finding no other food, in their rage have eaten their own flesh, and thus shockingly nourished themselves by their own substance. He allows persons in high office to praise themselves, if by this they can repel calumny and accusation, as did Pericles before the Athenians: but the Romans found fault with Cicero, who so frequently reminded them of his exertions in the conspiracy of Catiline; while, when Scipio told them that "they should not presume to judge of a citizen to whom they owed the power of judging all men," the people covered themselves with flowers, and followed him to the capitol to join in a thanksgiving to Jove. "Cicero," adds Plutarch, "praised himself without necessity. Scipio was in personal danger, and this took away what is odious in self-praise." An author seems sometimes to occupy the situation of a person in high office; and there may be occasions when with a noble simplicity, if he appeal to his works, of which all men may judge, he may be permitted to assert or to maintain his claims. It has at least been the practice of men of genius, for in this very essay we find Timotheus, Euripides, and Pindar censured, though they deserved all the praise they gave themselves.

EPICURUS, writing to a minister of state, declares, "If you desire glory, nothing can bestow it more than the letters I write to you:" and SENECA, in quoting these words, adds, "What Epicurus promised to his friend, that, my Lucilius, I promise you." *Orna me!* was the constant cry of CICERO; and he desires the historian Lucceius to write separately the conspiracy of Catiline, and to publish quickly, that while he yet lived he might taste the sweetness of his glory. HORACE and OVID were equally sensible to their immortality; but what modern poet would be tolerated with such an avowal? Yet DRYDEN honestly declares that it was better for him to own this failing of vanity, than the world to do it for him; and adds, "For what other reason have I spent my life in so unprofitable a study? Why

* See Quarrels of Authors, p. 281.
† Cary.

am I grown old in seeking so barren a reward as fame? The same parts and application which have made me a poet, might have raised me to any honours of the gown." Was not CERVANTES very sensible to his own merits when a rival started up? and did he not assert them too, and distinguish his own work by a handsome compliment? LOPE DE VEGA celebrated his own poetic powers under the pseudonyme of a pretended editor, Thomas Barguillos. I regret that his noble biographer, than whom no one can more truly sympathise with the emotions of genius, has censured the bard for his querulous or his intrepid tone, and for the quaint conceit of his title-page, where his detractor is introduced as a beetle in a *vega* or garden, attacking its flowers, but expiring in the very sweetness he would injure. The inscription under BOILEAU'S portrait, which gives a preference to the French satirist over Juvenal and Horace, is known to have been written by himself. Nor was BUTLER less proud of his own merits; for he has done ample justice to his Hudibras, and traced out, with great self-delight, its variety of excellences. RICHARDSON, the novelist, exhibits one of the most striking instances of what is called literary vanity, the delight of an author in his works; he has pointed out all the beauties of his three great works, in various manners *. He always taxed a visitor by one of his long letters. It was this intense self-delight which produced his voluminous labours.

There are certain authors whose very existence seems to require a high conception of their own talents; and who must, as some animals appear to do, furnish the means of life out of their own substance. These men of genius open their career with peculiar tastes, or with a predilection for some great work of no immediate interest; in a word, with many unpopular dispositions. Yet we see them magnanimous, though defeated, proceeding with the public feeling against them. At length we view them ranking with their rivals. Without having yielded up their peculiar tastes or their incorrigible viciousness, they have, however, heightened their individual excellences. No human opinion can change their self-opinion. Alive to the consciousness of their powers, their pursuits are placed above impediment, and their great views can suffer no contraction; *possunt quia posse videntur*. Such was the language Lord BACON once applied to himself when addressing a king. "I know," said the great philosopher, "that I am censured of some conceit of my ability or worth; but I pray your majesty impute it to desire—*possunt quia posse videntur*." These men of genius bear a charmed mail on their breast; "hopeless, not heartless," may be often the motto of their ensign; and if they do not always possess reputation, they still look onwards for fame; for these do not necessarily accompany each other.

An author is more sensible of his own merits, as he also is of his labour, which is invisible to all others, while he is unquestionably much less sensible to his defects than most of his readers. The author not only comprehends his merits better, because they have passed through a long process in his mind, but he is familiar with every part, while the reader has but a vague notion of the whole. Why does an excellent work, by repetition, rise in interest? Because in obtaining this gradual intimacy with an author, we appear to recover half the genius which we had lost on a first perusal. The work of genius too is associated, in the mind of the author, with much more than it contains; and the true supplement, which he only can give, has not always accompanied the work itself. We find great men often greater than the books they write. Ask the man of genius if he have written all that he wished to have written? Has he satisfied himself in this work, for which you accuse his pride? Has he dared what required intrepidity to achieve? Has he evaded difficulties which he should have overcome? The mind of the reader has the limits of a mere recipient, while that of the author, even after his work, is teeming with creation. "On many occasions, my soul seems to know more than it can say, and to be endowed with a mind by itself, far superior to the mind I really have," said MARIVAUX, with equal truth and happiness.

With these explanations of what are called the vanity and egotism of Genius, be it remembered, that the sense of their own sufficiency is assumed by men at their own risk. The great man who thinks greatly of himself, is not diminishing that greatness in heaping fuel on his fire. It is indeed otherwise with his unlucky brethren, with whom an illusion of literary vanity may end in the aberrations of harmless madness; as it happened to PERCIVAL STOCKDALE. After a parallel between himself and Charles XII. of Sweden, he concludes that "some parts will be to *his* advantage, and some to *mine*;" but in regard to fame, the main object between himself and Charles XII., Percival imagined that "his own will not probably take its fixed and immovable station, and shine with its expanded and permanent splendour, till it consecrates his ashes, till it illumines his tomb." After this, the reader, who may never have heard of the name of Percival Stockdale, must be told that there exist his own "Memoirs of his Life and Writings *." The memoirs of a

* I have observed them in Curiosities of Literature.

* I have sketched a character of PERCIVAL STOCKDALE, in Calamities of Authors; it was taken *ad vivum*.

scribbler who saw the prospects of life close on him while he imagined that his contemporaries were unjust, are instructive to literary men. To correct, and to be corrected, should be their daily practice, that they may be taught not only to exult in themselves, but to fear themselves.

It is hard to refuse these men of genius that *aura vitalis*, of which they are so apt to be liberal to others. Are they not accused of the meanest adulations? When a young writer experiences the notice of a person of some eminence, he has expressed himself in language which transcends that of mortality. A finer reason than reason itself inspires it. The sensation has been expressed with all its fulness by Milton:

"The debt immense of endless gratitude."

Who ever pays an "immense debt" in small sums? Every man of genius has left such honourable traces of his private affections; from LOCKE, whose dedication of his great work is more adulative than could be imagined from a temperate philosopher, to CHURCHILL, whose warm eulogiums on his friends beautifully contrast with his satire. Even in advanced age, the man of genius dwells on the praise he caught in his youth from veteran genius, which, like the aloe, will flower at the end of life. When Virgil was yet a youth, it is said that Cicero heard one of his eclogues, and exclaimed with his accustomed warmth,

Magna spes altera Romæ!

"The second hope of mighty Rome!" intending by the first either himself or Lucretius. The words of Cicero were the secret honey on which the imagination of Virgil fed for many a year; for in one of his latest productions, the twelfth book of the Æneid, he applies these very words to Ascanius. So long had the accents of Cicero's praise lingered in the poet's ear!

This extreme susceptibility of praise in men of genius is the same exuberant sensibility which is so alive to censure. I have elsewhere fully shown how some have died of criticism*. The self-love of genius is perhaps much more delicate than gross.

But this fatal susceptibility is the cause of that strange facility which has often astonished the world, by the sudden transitions of sentiment which literary characters have frequently exhibited. They have eulogised men and events which they had reprobated, and reprobated what they had eulogised. The recent history of political revolutions has furnished some monstrous examples of this subservience to power. Guicciardini records one of his own times, which has been often repeated in ours. JOVIANUS PONTANUS, the secretary of Ferdinand King of Naples, was also selected to be the tutor of the prince, his son. When Charles VIII. of France invaded Naples, Pontanus was deputed to address the French conqueror. To render himself agreeable to the enemies of his country, he did not avoid expatiating on the demerits of his expelled patrons: "So difficult it is," adds the grave and dignified historian, "for ourselves to observe that moderation and those precepts which no man knew better than Pontanus; who was endowed with such copious literature, and composed with such facility in moral philosophy, and possessed such acquirements in universal erudition, that he had made himself a prodigy to the eye of the world*." The student, occupied by abstract pursuits, may not indeed always take much interest in the change of dynasties; and perhaps the famous cancelled dedication to Cromwell, by the learned Orientalist DR. CASTELL, who supplied its place by another to Charles II., ought not to be placed to the account of political tergiversation. But the versatile adoration of the continental *savans* of the republic or the monarchy, the consul or the emperor, has inflicted an unhealing wound on the literary character; since, like PONTANUS, to gratify their new master, they had not the greatness of mind to save themselves from ingratitude to their old.

Their vengeance, as quickly kindled, lasts as long. Genius is a dangerous gift of nature. The same effervescent passions form a Catiline or a Cicero. Plato lays great stress on his man of genius possessing the most vehement passions, but he adds reason to restrain them. It is Imagination which by their side stands as their good or evil spirit. Glory or infamy is but a different direction of the same passion.

How are we to describe symptoms which, flowing from one source, yet show themselves in such opposite forms as those of an intermittent fever, a silent delirium, or a horrid hypochondriasm? Have we no other opiate to still the agony, no other cordial to warm the heart, than the great ingredient in the recipe of Plato's visionary man of genius—calm reason? Must men, who so rarely obtain this tardy panacea, remain with all their tortured and torturing passions about them, often self-disgusted, self-humiliated? The enmities of genius are often connected with their morbid imagination. These originate in casual slights, or in unguarded expressions, or in hasty opinions, or in witty derision, or even in the obtruding goodness of tender admonition. The man of genius broods over the phantom that darkens his feelings: he multiplies a single object; he magnifies the

* In Curiosities of Literature.

* Guicciardini, Book II.

smallest; and suspicions become certainties. It is in this unhappy state that he sharpens his vindictive fangs, in a libel called his "Memoirs," or in another species of public outrage, styled a "Criticism."

We are told, that COMINES the historian, when residing at the court of the Count de Charolois, afterwards Duke of Burgundy, one day returning from hunting, with inconsiderate jocularity sat down before the Count, and ordered the prince to pull off his boots. The Count would not affect greatness, and having executed his commission, in return for the princely amusement, the Count dashed the boot on Comines's nose, which bled; and from that time, he was mortified at the court of Burgundy, by retaining the nickname of *the booted head*. The blow rankled in the heart of the man of genius, and the Duke of Burgundy has come down to us in COMINES' Memoirs, blackened by his vengeance. Many, unknown to their readers, like COMINES, have had a booted head; but the secret poison is distilled on their lasting page, as we have recently witnessed in Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs. Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden originated in that great poet's prediction, that "cousin Swift would never be a poet;" a prediction which the wit never could forget. I have elsewhere fully written a tale of literary hatred, where is seen a man of genius, in the character of GILBERT STEWART, devoting a whole life to harassing the industry or the genius which he himself could not attain*.

A living Italian poet, of great celebrity, when at the court of Rome, presented a magnificent edition of his poetry to Pius VI. The bard, Mr. Hobhouse informs us, lived not in the good graces of his holiness, and although the pontiff accepted the volume, he did not forbear a severity of remark which could not fall unheeded by the modern poet; for on this occasion, repeating some verses of Metastasio, his holiness drily added, "No one now-a-days writes like that great poet." Never was this to be erased from memory: the stifled resentment of MONTI vehemently broke forth at the moment the French carried off Pius VI. from Rome. Then the long indignant secretary poured forth an invective more severe "against the great harlot," than was ever traced by a Protestant pen—MONTI now invoked the rock of Sardinia; the poet bade it fly from its base, that *the last of monsters* might not find even a tomb to shelter him. Such was the curse of a poet on his former patron, now an object of misery—a return for "placing him below Metastasio!"

The French Revolution affords illustrations of the worst human passions. When the wretched COLLOT D'HERBOIS was tossed up in the storm to the summit of power, a monstrous imagination seized him; he projected razing the city of Lyons and massacring its inhabitants. He had even the heart to commence, and to continue this conspiracy against human nature; the ostensible crime was royalism, but the secret motive is said to have been literary vengeance! As wretched a poet and actor as a man, D'Herbois had been hissed off the theatre at Lyons, and to avenge that ignominy, he had meditated over this vast and remorseless crime. Is there but one Collot D'Herbois in the universe?

Long since this was written, a fact has been recorded of CHENIER, the French dramatic poet, which parallels the horrid tale of Collot D'Herbois, which some have been willing to doubt from its enormity. It is said, that this monster, in the revolutionary period, when he had the power to save the life of his brother André, while his father, prostrate before a wretched son, was imploring for the life of an innocent brother, remained silent; it is further said, that he appropriated to himself a tragedy which he found among his brother's manuscripts. "Fratricide from literary jealousy," observes the relator of this anecdote, "was a crime reserved for a modern French revolutionist*." There are some pathetic stanzas which André was composing in his last moments, when awaiting his fate; the most pathetic of all stanzas is that one which he left unfinished—

Peut-être, avant que l'heure en cercle promenée
Ait posé, sur l'émail brillant,
Dans les soixante pas où sa route est bornée,
Son pied sonore et vigilant,
Le sommeil du tombeau pressera ma paupière—

At this unfinished stanza, was the pensive poet summoned to the guillotine!

* See Calamities of Authors.

CHAPTER XVI.

The domestic life of genius.—Defects of great compositions attributed to domestic infelicities.—The home of the literary character should be the abode of repose and silence.—Of the Father.—Of the Mother.—Of family genius.—Men of genius not more respected than other men in their domestic circle.—The cultivators of science and art do not meet on equal terms with others, in domestic life.—Their neglect of those around them.—Often accused of imaginary crimes.

WHEN the temper and the leisure of the literary character are alike broken, even his best works, the too faithful mirrors of his state of mind, will participate in its inequalities; and surely the incubations of genius, in its delicate and shadowy combinations, are not less sensible in their operation than the composition of sonorous bodies, where, while the warm metal is settling in the mould, even

* Edinburgh Review, xxxv. 159.

an unusual vibration of the air during the moment of fusion will injure the tone.

Some of the conspicuous blemishes of several great compositions may be attributed to the domestic infelicities of their authors. The desultory life of CAMOENS is imagined to be perceptible in the deficient connexion of his epic; and MILTON'S blindness and divided family prevented that castigating criticism, which otherwise had erased passages which have escaped from his revising hand. He felt himself in the situation of his Samson Agonistes, whom he so pathetically describes as,

"His foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind."

Even LOCKE complains of his "discontinued way of writing," and "writing by incoherent parcels," from the avocations of a busy and unsettled life, which undoubtedly produced a deficiency of method in the disposition of the materials of his great work. The careless rapid lines of DRYDEN are justly attributed to his distress, and indeed he pleads for his inequalities from his domestic circumstances. JOHNSON often silently, but eagerly, corrected the Ramblers in their successive editions, of which so many had been despatched in haste. The learned GREAVES offered some excuses for his errors in his edition of Abulfeda, from "his being five years encumbered with law-suits and diverted from his studies." When at length he returned to them, he expresses his surprise "at the pains he had formerly undergone," but of which he now felt himself "unwilling, he knew not how, of again undergoing." GOLDONI, when at the bar, abandoned his comic talent for several years; and having resumed it, his first comedy totally failed: "My head," says he, "was occupied with my professional employment; I was uneasy in mind and in bad humour." A law-suit, a bankruptcy, a domestic feud, or an indulgence in criminal or in foolish pursuits, have chilled the fervour of imagination, scattered into fragments many a noble design, and paralysed the finest genius. The distractions of GUIDO'S studies from his passion for gaming, and of PARMEGIANO'S for alchemy, have been traced in their works, which are often hurried over and unequal. It is curious to observe, that CUMBERLAND attributes the excellence of his comedy, "The West Indian," to the peculiarly happy situation in which he found himself at the time of its composition, free from the incessant avocations which had crossed him in the writing of "The Brothers." "I was master of my time, my mind was free, and I was happy in the society of the dearest friends I had on earth. The calls of office, the cavillings of angry rivals, and the gibings of newspaper critics, could not reach me on the banks of the Shannon, where all within-doors was love and affection. In no other period of my life have the same happy circumstances combined to cheer me in any of my literary labours."

The best years of MENGS' life were embittered by his father, a poor artist, and who, with poorer feelings, converted his home into a prison-house, forced his son into the slavery of stipulated task-work, while bread and water were the only fruits of the fine arts. In this domestic persecution, the son contracted those morose and saturnine habits which in after-life marked the character of the ungenial MENGS. ALONSO CANO, a celebrated Spanish painter, would have carried his art to perfection, had not the unceasing persecution of the inquisitors entirely deprived him of that tranquillity so necessary to the very existence of art. OVID, in exile on the barren shores of Tomos, deserted by his genius, in his copious *Tristia* loses much of the luxuriance of his fancy.

We have a remarkable evidence of domestic unhappiness annihilating the very faculty of genius itself, in the case of Dr. BROOK TAYLOR, the celebrated author of the "Linear Perspective." This great mathematician in early life distinguished himself as an inventor in science, and the most sanguine hopes of his future discoveries were raised both at home and abroad. Two unexpected events in domestic life extinguished his inventive faculties. After the loss of two wives, whom he regarded with no common affection, he became unfitted for profound studies; he carried his own personal despair into his favourite objects of pursuit, and abandoned them. The inventor of the most original work suffered the last fifteen years of his life to drop away, without hope, and without exertion; nor is this a solitary instance, where a man of genius, deprived of the idolised partner of his existence, has no longer been able to find an object in his studies, and where even fame itself has ceased to interest. The reason which ROUSSEAU alleges for the cynical spleen which so frequently breathes forth in his works, shows how the domestic character of the man of genius leaves itself in his productions. After describing the infelicity of his domestic affairs, occasioned by the mother of Theresa, and Theresa herself, both women of the lowest class and the worst dispositions, he adds, on this wretched marriage, "These unexpected disagreeable events, in a state of my own choice, plunged me into literature, to give a new direction and diversion to my mind; and in all my first works, I scattered that bilious humour which had occasioned this very occupation." Our author's character in his works was the very opposite to the one in which he appeared to these low people. Feeling his degradation among them, for they treated his simplicity as utter silliness, his personal

timidity assumed a tone of boldness and originality in his writings, while a strong personal sense of shame heightened his causticity, and he delighted to contemn that urbanity in which he had never shared, and which he knew not to practise. His miserable subservience to these people was the real cause of his oppressed spirit calling out for some undefined freedom in society; and thus the real Rousseau, with all his disordered feelings, only appeared in his writings. The secrets of his heart were confided to his pen.

"The painting-room must be like Eden before the fall; no joyless turbulent passions must enter there,"—exclaims the enthusiast RICHARDSON. The home of the literary character should be the abode of repose and of silence. There must he look for the feasts of study, in progressive and alternate labours; a taste "which," says GIBBON, "I would not exchange for the treasures of India." ROUSSEAU had always a work going on, for rainy days and spare hours, such as his dictionary of music: a variety of works never tired; it was the single one which exhausted. METASTASIO looks with delight on his variety, which resembled the fruits in the garden of Armida,

> E mentre spunta l'un, l'altro mature.
> While one matures, the other buds and blows.

Nor is it always fame, or any lower motive, which may induce the literary character to hold an unwearied pen. Another equally powerful exists, which must remain inexplicable to him who knows not to escape from the listlessness of life—it is the passion for literary occupation. He whose eye can only measure the space occupied by the voluminous labours of the elder Pliny, of a Mazzuchelli, a Muratori, a Montfaucon, and a Gough, all men who laboured from the love of labour, and can see nothing in that space but the industry which filled it, is like him who only views a city at a distance—the streets and the edifices, and all the life and population within, he can never know. These literary characters projected their works as so many schemes to escape from uninteresting pursuits; and, in these folios, how many evils of life did they bury, while their happiness expanded with their volume! Aulus Gellius desired to live no longer than he was able to retain the faculty of writing and observing. The literary character must grow as impassioned with his subject as Ælian with his History of Animals; "wealth and honour I might have obtained at the courts of princes; but I preferred the delight of multiplying my knowledge. I am aware that the avaricious and the ambitious will accuse me of folly, but I have always found most pleasure in observing the nature of animals, studying their character, and writing their history."

Even with those who have acquired their celebrity, the love of literary labour is not diminished; a circumstance recorded by the younger Pliny of Livy. In a preface to one of his lost books, that historian had said that he had obtained sufficient glory by his former writings on the Roman history, and might now repose in silence; but his mind was so restless and so abhorrent of indolence, that it only felt its existence in literary exertion. In a similar situation the feeling was fully experienced by HUME. Our philosopher completed his History neither for money nor for fame, having then more than a sufficiency of both—but chiefly to indulge a habit as a resource against indolence *. These are the minds which are without hope, if they are without occupation.

Amidst the repose and silence of study, delightful to the literary character, are the soothing interruptions of the voices of those whom he loves, recalling him from his abstractions into social existence. These re-animate his languor, and moments of inspiration are caught in the emotions of affection, when a father or a friend, a wife, a daughter, or a sister, become the participators of his own tastes, the companions of his studies, and identify their happiness with his fame. A beautiful incident in the domestic life of literature is one which Morellet has revealed of MARMONTEL. In presenting his collected works to his wife, she discovered that the author had dedicated his volumes to herself; but the dedication was not made painful to her modesty, for it was not a public one. Nor was it so concise as to be mistaken for a compliment. The theme was copious, for the heart overflowed in the pages consecrated to her domestic virtues; and MARMONTEL left it as a record, that their children might learn the gratitude of their father, and know the character of their mother, when the writer should be no more. Many readers were perhaps surprised to find in NECKER's *Compte rendu au Roi*, a political and financial work, a great and lovely character of domestic excellence in his wife. This was more obtrusive than Marmontel's private dedication; yet it was not the less sincere. If NECKER failed in the cautious reserve of private feelings, who will censure? Nothing seems misplaced which the heart dictates.

If HORACE were dear to his friends, he declares they owed him to his father.

> ——— purus et insons
> (Ut me collaudem) si vivo et carus amicis,
> Causa fuit Pater his.
> If pure and innocent, if dear (forgive
> These little praises) to my friends I live,
> My father was the cause.

* This appears in one of his interesting letters first published in the Literary Gazette, Oct. 20, 1821.

This intelligent father, an obscure tax-gatherer, discovered the propensity of Horace's mind; for he removed the boy of genius from a rural seclusion to the metropolis, anxiously attending on him to his various masters. GROTIUS, like Horace, celebrated in verse his gratitude to his excellent father, who had formed him not only to be a man of learning, but a great character. VITRUVIUS pours forth a grateful prayer to the memory of his parents, who had instilled into his soul a love for literary and philosophical subjects; and it is an amiable trait in PLUTARCH to have introduced his father in the Symposiacs, as an elegant critic and moralist, and his brother Lamprias, whose sweetness of disposition, inclining to cheerful raillery, the Sage of Cheronæa has immortalized. The father of GIBBON urged him to literary distinction, and the dedication of the "Essay on Literature" to that father, connected with his subsequent labour, shows the force of the excitement. The father of POPE lived long enough to witness his son's celebrity.

"Tears such as tender fathers shed,
Warm from my eyes descend,
For joy, to think when I am dead,
My son shall have mankind his Friend *."

The son of BUFFON one day surprised his father by the sight of a column, which he had raised to the memory of his father's eloquent genius. "It will do you honour," observed the Gallic sage. And when that son in the revolution was led to the guillotine, he ascended in silence, so impressed with his father's fame, that he only told the people, "I am the son of Buffon!"

Fathers absorbed in their occupations can but rarely attract their offspring. The first durable impressions of our moral existence come from the mother. The first prudential wisdom to which Genius listens falls from her lips, and only her caresses can create the moments of tenderness. The earnest discernment of a mother's love survives in the imagination of manhood. The mother of Sir WILLIAM JONES, having formed a plan for the education of her son, withdrew from great connexions that she might live only for that son. Her great principle of education, was to excite by curiosity; the result could not fail to be knowledge. "Read, and you will know," she constantly replied to her filial pupil. And we have his own acknowledgment, that to this maxim, which produced the habit of study, he was indebted for his future attainments. KANT, the German metaphysician, was always fond of declaring that he owed to the ascendency of his mother's character the severe inflexibility of his moral principles. The mother of BURNS kindled his genius by reciting the old Scottish ballads, while to his father he attributed his less pleasing cast of character. Bishop WATSON traced to the affectionate influence of his mother, the religious feelings which he confesses he inherited from her. The mother of EDGEWORTH, confined through life to her apartment, was the only person who studied his constitutional volatility. When he hastened to her death-bed, the last imperfect accents of that beloved voice reminded him of the past and warned him of the future, and he declares, that voice "had a happy influence on his habits,"—as happy, at least, as his own volatile nature would allow. "To the manner in which my mother formed me at an early age," said Napoleon, "I principally owe my subsequent elevation. My opinion is, that the future good or bad conduct of a child entirely depends upon the mother."

There is this remarkable in the strong affections of the mother in the formation of the literary character, that, without even partaking of, or sympathising with the pleasures the child is fond of, the mother will often cherish those first decided tastes merely from the delight of promoting the happiness of her son; so that that genius, which some would produce on a preconceived system, or implant by stratagem, or enforce by application, with her may be only the watchful labour of love. One of our most eminent antiquaries has often assured me that his great passion, and I may say his genius, for his curious knowledge and his vast researches, he attributes to maternal affection. When his early taste for these studies was thwarted by the very different one of his father's, the mother silently supplied her son with the sort of treasures he languished for, blessing the knowledge, which indeed she could not share with him, but which she beheld imparting happiness to her youthful antiquary.

There is, what may be called, FAMILY GENIUS. In the home of a man of genius is diffused an electrical atmosphere, and his own pre-eminence strikes out talents in all. "The active pursuits of my father," says the daughter of EDGEWORTH, "spread an animation through the house by connecting children with all that was going on, and allowing them to join in thought and conversation; sympathy and emulation excited mental exertion in the most agreeable manner." EVELYN, in his beautiful retreat at Saye's Court, had inspired his family with that variety of taste which he himself was spreading throughout the nation. His son translated Rapin's "Gardens," which poem the father proudly preserved in his "Sylva;" his lady, ever busied in his study, excelled in the arts her husband loved, and designed the frontispiece to his Lucretius: she was the cultivator of their

* These lines have been happily applied by Mr. BOWLES to the father of POPE.—The poet's domestic affections were as permanent as they were strong.

celebrated garden, which served as "an example" of his great work on "forest trees." Cowley, who has commemorated Evelyn's love of books and gardens, has delightfully applied them to his lady, in whom, says the bard, Evelyn meets both pleasures:

> "The fairest garden in her looks,
> And in her mind the wisest books."

The house of HALLER resembled a temple consecrated to science and the arts, and the votaries were his own family. The universal acquirements of HALLER were possessed in some degree by every one under his roof; and their studious delight in transcribing manuscripts, in consulting authors, in botanising, drawing and colouring the plants under his eye, formed occupations which made the daughters happy and the sons eminent. The painter STELLA inspired his family to copy his fanciful inventions, and the playful graver of Claudine Stella, his niece, animated his "Sports of Children." I have seen a print of COYPEL in his *studio*, and by his side his little daughter, who is intensely watching the progress of her father's pencil. The artist has represented himself in the act of suspending his labour to look on his child. At that moment, his thoughts were divided between two objects of his love. The character and the works of the late Elizabeth HAMILTON were formed entirely by her brother. Admiring the man she loved, she imitated what she admired; and while the brother was arduously completing the version of the Persian Hedaya, the sister, who had associated with his morning tasks and his evening conversations, was recalling all the ideas, and portraying her fraternal master in her "Hindoo Rajah."

Nor are there wanting instances where this FAMILY GENIUS has been carried down through successive generations: the volume of the father has been continued by a son, or a relative. The history of the family of the ZWINGERS is a combination of studies and inherited tastes. Theodore published, in 1697, a folio herbal, of which his son Frederic gave an enlarged edition in 1744; and the family was honoured by their name having been given to a genus of plants dedicated to their memory, and known in botany by the name of the *Zwingera*. In history and in literature, the family name was equally eminent; the same Theodore continued a great work, "The Theatre of Human Life," which had been begun by his father-in-law, and which for the third time was enlarged by another son. Among the historians of Italy, it is delightful to contemplate this family genius transmitting itself with unsullied probity among the three VILLANIS, and the MALASPINIS, and the two PORTAS. The history of the learned family of the STEPHENS presents a dynasty of literature; and to distinguish the numerous members, they have been designated as Henry I. and Henry II.,—as Robert I., the II., and the III. Our country may exult in having possessed many literary families—the WARTONS, the father and two sons; the BURNEYS, more in number; and the nephews of Milton, whose humble torch at least was lighted at the altar of the great bard.

No event in literary history is more impressive than the fate of QUINTILIAN; it was in the midst of his elaborate work, which was composed to form the literary character of a son, that he experienced the most terrible affliction in the domestic life of genius—the successive deaths of his wife and his only child. It was a moral earthquake with a single survivor amidst the ruins. An awful burst of parental and literary affliction breaks forth in Quintilian's lamentation,—"My wealth, and my writings, the fruits of a long and painful life, must now be reserved only for strangers; all I possess is for aliens, and no longer mine!" We feel the united agony of the husband, the father, and the man of genius!

Deprived of these social consolations, we see JOHNSON call about him those whose calamities exiled them from society, and his roof lodges the blind, the lame, and the poor; for the heart must possess something, it can call its own, to be kind to.

In domestic life, the Abbé DE ST. PIERRE enlarged its moral vocabulary, by fixing in his language two significant words. One served to explain the virtue most familiar to him—*bienfaisance*; and that irritable vanity which magnifies its ephemeral fame, the sage reduced to a mortifying diminutive—*la gloriole!*

It has often excited surprise that men of genius are not more reverenced than other men in their domestic circle. The disparity between the public and the private esteem of the same man is often striking. In privacy we discover that the comic genius is not always cheerful, that the sage is sometimes ridiculous, and the poet seldom delightful. The golden hour of invention must terminate like other hours, and when the man of genius returns to the cares, the duties, the vexations, and the amusements of life, his companions behold him as one of themselves—the creature of habits and infirmities.

In the business of life, the cultivators of science and the arts, with all their simplicity of feeling and generous openness about them, do not meet on equal terms with other men. Their frequent abstractions calling off the mind to whatever enters into its lonely pursuits, render them greatly inferior to others in practical and immediate observation. Studious men have been reproached as being so deficient in the knowledge of the

human character, that they are usually disqualified for the management of public business. Their confidence in their friends has no bound, while they become the easy dupes of the designing. A friend, who was in office with the late Mr. CUMBERLAND, assures me, that he was so intractable to the forms of business, and so easily induced to do more or to do less than he ought, that he was compelled to perform the official business of this literary man, to free himself from his annoyance; and yet, CUMBERLAND could not be reproached with any deficiency in a knowledge of the human character, which he was always touching with caustic pleasantry.

ADDISON and PRIOR were unskilful statesmen; and MALESHERBES confessed, a few days before his death, that TURGOT and himself, men of genius and philosophers, from whom the nation had expected much, had badly administered the affairs of the state; for "knowing men but by books, and unskilful in business, we could not form the king to the government." A man of genius may know the whole map of the world of human nature; but, like the great geographer, may be apt to be lost in the wood which any one in the neighbourhood knows better than him.

"The conversation of a poet," says Goldsmith, "is that of a man of sense, while his actions are those of a fool." Genius, careless of the future, and often absent in the present, avoids too deep a commingling in the minor cares of life. Hence it becomes a victim to common fools and vulgar villains. "I love my family's welfare, but I cannot be so foolish as to make myself the slave to the minute affairs of a house," said MONTESQUIEU. The story told of a man of learning is probably true, however ridiculous it may appear. Deeply occupied in his library, one, rushing in, informed him that the house was on fire: "Go to my wife —these matters belong to her!" pettishly replied the interrupted student. BACON sat at one end of his table wrapt in many a reverie, while at the other the creatures about him were trafficking with his honour, and ruining his good name: "I am better fitted for this," said that great man once, holding out a book, "than for the life I have of late led. Nature has not fitted me for that; knowing myself by inward calling to be fitter to hold a book than to play a part."

BUFFON, who consumed his mornings in his old tower of Montbar, at the end of his garden, with all nature opening to him, formed all his ideas of what was passing before him from the arts of a pliant capuchin, and the comments of a perruquier on the scandalous chronicle of the village. These humble confidants he treated as children, but the children were commanding the great man! YOUNG, whose satires give the very anatomy of human foibles, was wholly governed by his housekeeper. She thought and acted for him, which probably greatly assisted the "Night Thoughts," but his curate exposed the domestic economy of a man of genius by a satirical novel. If I am truly informed, in that gallery of satirical portraits in his "Love of Fame," YOUNG has omitted one of the most striking—his OWN! While the poet's eye was glancing from "earth to heaven," he totally overlooked the lady whom he married, and who soon became the object of his contempt; and not only his wife, but his only son, who when he returned home for the vacation from Winchester school, was only admitted into the presence of his poetical father on the first and on the last day; and whose unhappy life is attributed to this unnatural neglect*:—a lamentable domestic catastrophe, which, I fear, has too frequently occurred amidst the ardour and occupations of literary glory. Much, too much, of the tender domesticity of life is violated by literary characters. All that lives under their eye, all that should be guided by their hand, the recluse and abstracted men of genius must leave to their own direction. But let it not be forgotten, that, if such neglect others, they also neglect themselves, and are deprived of those family enjoyments for which few men have warmer sympathies. While the literary character burns with the ambition of raising a great literary name, he is too often forbidden to taste of this domestic intercourse, or to indulge the versatile curiosity of his private amusements—for he is chained to his great labour. ROBERTSON felt this while employed on his histories, and he at length rejoiced when, after many years of devoted toil, he returned to the luxury of reading for his own amusement and to the conversation of his friends. "Such a sacrifice," observes his philosophical biographer, "must be more or less made by all who devote themselves to letters, whether with a view to emolument or to fame; nor would it perhaps be easy to make it, were it not for the prospect (seldom, alas! realised) of earning by their exertions that learned and honourable leisure, which he was so fortunate as to attain."

But men of genius have often been accused of imaginary crimes. Their very eminence attracts the lie of calumny, which tradition often conveys beyond the possibility of refutation. Sometimes they are reproached as wanting in affection, when they displease their fathers by making an obscure name celebrated. The family of DESCARTES lamented, as a blot in their escutcheon, that Des-

* These facts are drawn from a manuscript of the late Sir Herbert Croft, who regretted that Dr. Johnson would not suffer him to give this account during the doctor's lifetime, in his life of Young, but which it had always been his intention to have added to it.

cartes, who was born a gentleman, should become a philosopher; and this elevated genius was refused the satisfaction of embracing an unforgiving parent, while his dwarfish brother, with a mind diminutive as his person, ridiculed his philosophic relative, and turned to advantage his philosophic disposition. The daughter of ADDISON was educated with a perfect contempt of authors, and blushed to bear a name more illustrious than that of all the Warwicks, on her alliance to which noble family she prided herself. The children of MILTON, far from solacing the age of their blind parent, became impatient for his death, embittered his last hours with scorn and disaffection, and combined to cheat and rob him. Milton, having enriched our national poetry by two immortal epics, with patient grief blessed the single female who did not entirely abandon him, and the obscure fanatic who was pleased with his poems because they were religious. What felicities! what laurels! And now we have recently learned, that the daughter of Madame DE SÉVIGNÉ lived on ill terms with her mother, of whose enchanting genius she appears to have been insensible! The unquestionable documents are two letters hitherto cautiously secreted. The daughter was in the house of her mother, when an extraordinary letter was addressed to her from the chamber of Madame de Sévigné, after a sleepless night. In this she describes, with her peculiar felicity, the ill-treatment she received from the daughter she idolised; it is a kindling effusion of maternal reproach, and tenderness, and genius*.

Some have been deemed disagreeable companions, because they felt the weariness of dulness, or the impertinence of intrusion; described as bad husbands, when united to women who, without a kindred feeling, had the mean art to prey upon their infirmities; or as bad fathers, because their offspring have not always reflected the moral beauty of their own page. But the magnet loses nothing of its virtue, even when the particles about it, incapable themselves of being attracted, are not acted on by its occult property.

CHAPTER XVII.

The poverty of literary men.—Poverty, a relative quality.—Of the poverty of literary men in what degree desirable.—Extreme poverty.—Task-work.—Of gratuitous works.—A project to provide against the worst state of poverty among literary men.

POVERTY is a state not so fatal to genius, as it is usually conceived to be. We shall find that it has been sometimes voluntarily chosen; and that to connect too closely great fortune with great genius, creates one of those powerful but unhappy alliances, where the one party must necessarily act contrary to the interests of the other.

Poverty is a relative quality, like cold and heat, which are but the increase or the diminution in our own sensations. The positive idea must arise from comparison. There is a state of poverty reserved even for the wealthy man, the instant that he comes in hateful contact with the enormous capitalist. But there is a poverty neither vulgar nor terrifying, asking no favours and on no terms receiving any; a poverty which annihilates its ideal evils, and, becoming even a source of pride, will confer independence, that first step to genius.

Among the continental nations, to accumulate wealth in the spirit of a capitalist, does not seem to form the prime object of domestic life. The traffic of money is with them left to the traffickers, their merchants, and their financiers. In our country, the commercial character has so closely interwoven and identified itself with the national one, and its peculiar views have so terminated all our pursuits, that every rank is alike influenced by its spirit, and things are valued by a market-price, which naturally admit of no such appraisement. In a country where "The Wealth of Nations" has been fixed as the first principle of political existence, wealth has raised an aristocracy more noble than nobility, more celebrated than genius, more popular than patriotism; but however it may partake at times of a generous nature, it hardly looks beyond its own narrow pale. It is curious to notice that Montesquieu, who was in England, observed, that "If I had been born here, nothing could have consoled me in failing to accumulate a large fortune; but I do not lament the mediocrity of my circumstances in France." The sources of our national wealth have greatly multiplied, and the evil has consequently increased, since the visit of the great philosopher.

The cares of property, the daily concerns of a family, the pressure of such minute disturbers of their studies, have induced some great minds to regret the abolition of those monastic orders, beneath whose undisturbed shade were produced the mighty labours of a MONTFAUCON, a CALMET, a FLOREZ, and the still unfinished volumes of the BENEDICTINES. Often has the literary character, amidst the busied delights of study, sighed "to bid a farewell sweet" to the turbulence of society. It was not discontent, nor any undervaluing of general society, but the pure enthusiasm of the library, which once induced the studious EVELYN to sketch a retreat of this nature, which he addressed to his friend, the illustrious BOYLE. He proposed to form "A college where persons of the same turn of mind might enjoy the pleasure of agreeable society, and at the same time pass

* Lettres inédites de Madame de Sévigné, pp. 201 and 203.

their days without care or interruption*. This abandonment of their life to their genius has, indeed, often cost them too dear, from the days of SOPHOCLES, who, ardent in his old age, neglected his family affairs, and was brought before his judges by his relations, as one fallen into a second childhood. The aged poet brought but one solitary witness in his favour—an unfinished tragedy; which having read, the judges rose before him, and retorted the charge on his accusers.

A parallel circumstance occurred to the Abbé COTIN, the victim of a rhyme of the satirical Boileau. Studious, and without fortune, Cotin had lived contented till he incurred the unhappiness of inheriting a large estate. Then a world of cares opened on him; his rents were not paid, and his creditors increased. Dragged from his Hebrew and Greek, poor Cotin resolved to make over his entire fortune to one of his heirs, on condition of maintenance. His other relations assuming that a man who parted with his estate in his lifetime must necessarily be deranged, brought the learned Cotin into court. Cotin had nothing to say in his own favour, but requested his judges would allow him to address them from the sermons which he preached. The good sense, the sound reasoning, and the erudition of the preacher were such, that the whole bench unanimously declared that they themselves might be considered as madmen, were they to condemn a man of letters who was desirous of escaping from the incumbrance of a fortune which had only interrupted his studies.

There may then be sufficient motives to induce such a man to make a state of mediocrity his choice. If he lose his happiness, he mutilates his genius. GOLDONI, with all the simplicity of his feelings and habits, in reviewing his life, tells us how he was always relapsing into his old propensity of comic writing; "but the thought of this does not disturb me," says he; "for though in any other situation I might have been in easier circumstances, I should never have been so happy." BAYLE is a parent of the modern literary character; he pursued the same course, and early in life adopted the principle "Neither to fear bad fortune, nor have any ardent desires for good." Acquainted with the passions only as their historian, and living only for literature, he sacrificed to it the two great acquisitions of human pursuits, fortune and a family: but in what country had Bayle not a family and a possession in his fame? HUME and GIBBON had the most perfect conception of the literary character, and they were aware of this important principle in its habits: "My own revenue," said HUME, "will be sufficient for a man of letters, who surely needs less money, both for his entertainment and credit, than other people." GIBBON observed of himself, "Perhaps the golden mediocrity of my fortune has contributed to fortify my application."

The state of poverty, then, desirable in the domestic life of genius, is one in which the cares of property never intrude, and the want of wealth is never perceived. This is not indigence; that state which, however dignified the man of genius himself may be, must inevitably degrade! for the heartless will gibe, and even the compassionate turn aside in contempt. This literary outcast will soon be forsaken even by himself! his own intellect will be clouded over, and his limbs shrink in the palsy of bodily misery and shame:—

Malesuada Fames, et turpis Egestas
Terribiles visu formæ.

Not that in this history of men of genius, we are without illustrious examples of those who have even *learnt to want*, that they might emancipate their genius from their necessities!

We see ROUSSEAU rushing out of the palace of the financier, selling his watch, copying music by the sheet, and by the mechanical industry of two hours purchasing ten for genius. We may smile at the enthusiasm of young BARRY, who finding himself too constant a haunter of taverns, imagined that this expenditure of time was occasioned by having money; and to put an end to the conflict, he threw the little he possessed at once into the Liffey; but let us not forget that BARRY, in the maturity of life, confidently began a labour of years, and one of the noblest inventions in his art, a great poem in a picture, with no other resource than what he found by secret labours through the night, in furnishing the shops with those slight and saleable sketches which secured uninterrupted mornings for his genius. SPINOSA, a name as celebrated, and perhaps as calumniated, as Epicurus, lived in all sorts of abstinence, even of honours, of pensions, and of presents; which, however disguised by kindness, he would not accept, so fearful was this philosopher of a chain! Lodging in a cottage, and obtaining a livelihood by polishing optical glasses, he declared he had never spent more than he earned, and certainly thought there was such a thing as superfluous earnings. At his death his small accounts showed how he had subsisted on a few pence a-day, and

"Enjoy'd, spare feast! a radish and an egg."

* This romantic literary retreat is one of those delightful reveries which the elegant taste of EVELYN abounded with. It may be found at full length in the fifth volume of Boyle's Works, not in the second, as the Biog. Brit. says. His lady was to live among the society. "If I and my wife take up two apartments, for we are to be decently asunder, however I stipulate, and her inclination will greatly suit with it, that shall be no impediment to the society, but a considerable advantage to the economic part," &c.

Poussin persisted in refusing a higher price than that affixed to the back of his pictures, at the time he was living without a domestic. The great oriental scholar, Anquetil de Perron, is a recent example of the literary character carrying his indifference to privations to the very cynicism of poverty; and he seems to exult over his destitution with the same pride as others would expatiate over their possessions. Yet, we must not forget, to use the words of Lord Bacon, that "judging that means were to be spent upon learning, and not learning to be applied to means," De Perron refused the offer of thirty thousand livres for his copy of the Zend-avesta. Writing to some Bramins, he describes his life at Paris to be much like their own. "I subsist on the produce of my literary labours without revenue, establishment, or place. I have no wife nor children; alone, absolutely free, but always the friend of men of probity. In a perpetual war with my senses, I triumph over the attractions of the world or I contemn them."

This ascetic existence is not singular. Parini, a great modern poet of Italy, whom the Milanese point out to strangers as the glory of their city, lived in the same state of unrepining poverty. Mr. Hobhouse has given us this self-portrait of the poet:—

"Me, non nato a percotere
Le dure illustri porte,
Nudo accorrà, ma libero
Il regno della morte."

Naked, but free! A life of hard deprivations was long that of the illustrious Linnæus. Without fortune, to that great mind it never seemed necessary to acquire any. Peregrinating on foot with a stylus, a magnifying-glass, and a basket for plants, he shared the rustic meal of the peasant. Never was glory obtained at a cheaper rate! exclaims one of his eulogists. Satisfied with the least of the little, he only felt one perpetual want—that of completing his Floras. Not that Linnæus was insensible to his situation, for he gave his name to a little flower in Lapland—the *Linnæa Borealis*, from the fanciful analogy he discovered between its character and his own early fate, "a little northern plant flowering early, depressed, abject, and long overlooked." The want of fortune, however, did not deprive this man of genius of his true glory, nor of that statue raised to him in the gardens of the University of Upsal, nor of that solemn eulogy delivered by a crowned head, nor of those medals which his nation struck to commemorate the genius of the three kingdoms of nature!

This, then, is the race who have often smiled at the light regard of their good neighbours when contrasted with their own celebrity; for in poverty and in solitude such men are not separated from their fame; that is ever proceeding, ever raising a secret, but constant, triumph in their minds.

Yes! Genius, undegraded and unexhausted, may, indeed, even in a garret glow in its career; but it must be on the principle which induced Rousseau solemnly to renounce writing "par métier." This in the *Journal des Sçavans* he once attempted, but found himself quite inadequate to "the profession *." In a garret, the author of the "Studies of Nature," as he exultingly tells us, arranged his work. "It was in a little garret, in the new street of St. Etienne du Mont, where I resided four years, in the midst of physical and domestic afflictions. But there I enjoyed the most exquisite pleasures of my life, amid profound solitude and an enchanting horizon. There I put the finishing hand to my 'Studies of Nature,' and there I published them." Pope, one day taking his usual walk with Harte in the Haymarket, desired him to enter a little shop, where going up three pair of stairs into a small room, Pope said, "In this garret Addison wrote his 'Campaign!'" To the feelings of the poet this garret had become a consecrated spot; Genius seemed more itself, placed in contrast with its miserable locality!

The man of genius wrestling with oppressive fortune, who follows the avocations of an author as a precarious source of existence, should take as the model of the authorial life, that of Dr. Johnson. The dignity of the literary character was as deeply associated with his feelings, and the "reverence thyself" as present to his mind, when doomed to be one of the *Helots* of literature, by Osborn, Cave, and Miller, as when, in the honest triumph of Genius, he repelled a tardy adulation of the lordly Chesterfield. Destitute of this ennobling principle, the author sinks into the tribe of those rabid adventurers of the pen, who have masked the degraded form of the literary character under the assumed title of "authors by profession †"—the Guthries, the Ralphs, and the Amhursts. "There are worse evils, for the literary man," says a living author, who himself is the true model of the great literary character, "than neglect, poverty, imprisonment, and death. There are even more pitiable objects than Chatterton himself with the poison at his lips."—"I should die with hunger, were I at peace with the

* Twice he repeated this resolution. See his Works, vol. xxxi. p. 283; vol. xxxii. p. 90.

† From an original letter which I have published from Guthrie to a minister of state, this modern phrase appears to have been his own invention. The principle unblushingly avowed, required the sanction of a respectable designation. I have preserved it in "Calamities of Authors."

world!" exclaimed a corsair of literature,—and dashed his pen into the black flood before him of soot and gall.

In substituting fortune for the object of his designs, the man of genius deprives himself of those heats of inspiration reserved for him who lives for himself; the *mollia tempora fandi* of Art. If he be subservient to the public taste, without daring to raise it to his own, the creature of his times has not the choice of his subjects, which choice is itself a sort of invention. A task-worker ceases to think his own thoughts. The stipulated price and time are weighing on his pen or his pencil, while the hour-glass is dropping its hasty sands. If the man of genius would be wealthy and even luxurious, another fever besides the thirst of glory torments him. Such insatiable desires create many fears, and a mind in fear is a mind in slavery. In one of SHAKESPEARE'S sonnets he pathetically laments this compulsion of his necessities which forced him to the trade of pleasing the public; and he illustrates this degradation by a novel image. "Chide Fortune," cries the bard,—

> "The guilty goddess of my harmless deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide
> Than public means which public manners breeds;
> Thence comes it that my name receives a brand;
> *And almost thence my nature is subdued*
> *To what it works in*, LIKE THE DYER'S HAND."

Such is the fate of that author, who, in his variety of task-works, blue, yellow, and red, lives without ever having shown his own natural complexion. We hear the eloquent truth from one who has alike shared in the bliss of composition, and the misery of its "daily bread." "A single hour of composition won from the business of the day, is worth more than the whole day's toil of him who works at the *trade of literature*: in the one case, the spirit comes joyfully to refresh itself, like a hart to the water-brooks; in the other, it pursues its miserable way, panting and jaded with the dogs of hunger and necessity behind*." We trace the fate of all task-work in the history of POUSSIN, when called on to reside at the French court. Labouring without intermission, sometimes on one thing and sometimes on another, and hurried on in things which required both time and thought, he saw too clearly the fatal tendency of such a life, and exclaimed with ill-suppressed bitterness, "If I stay long in this country, I shall turn dauber like the rest here." The great artist abruptly returned to Rome to regain the possession of his own thoughts.

It has been a question with some, more indeed abroad than at home, whether the art of instructing mankind by the press would not be less suspicious in its character, were it less interested in one of its prevalent motives? Some noble self-denials of this kind are recorded. The principle of emolument will produce the industry which furnishes works for popular demand; but it is only the principle of honour which can produce the lasting works of genius. BOILEAU seems to censure Racine for having accepted money for one of his dramas, while he, who was not rich, gave away his polished poems to the public. He seems desirous of raising the art of writing to a more disinterested profession than any other, requiring no fees for the professors. OLIVET presented his elaborate edition of Cicero to the world, requiring no other remuneration than its glory. MILTON did not compose his immortal work for his trivial copyright; and LINNÆUS sold his labours for a single ducat. The Abbé MABLY, the author of many political and moral works, lived on little, and would accept only a few presentation copies from the booksellers. But, since we have become a nation of book-collectors, and since there exists, as Mr. Coleridge describes it, "a reading public," this principle of honour is altered. Wealthy and even noble authors are proud to receive the largest tribute to their genius, because this tribute is the certain evidence of the number who pay it. The property of a book, therefore, represents to the literary candidate the collective force of the thousands of voters on whose favour his claims can only exist. This change in the affairs of the literary republic, in our country, was felt by GIBBON, who has fixed on "the patronage of booksellers" as the standard of public opinion: "the measure of their liberality," he says, "is the least ambiguous test of our common success." The philosopher accepted it as a substitute for that "friendship or favour of princes, of which he could not boast." The same opinion was held by JOHNSON. Yet, looking on the present state of English literature, the most profuse, perhaps, in Europe, we cannot refrain from thinking, that the "patronage of booksellers" is frequently injurious to the great interests of literature.

The dealers in enormous speculative purchases are only subservient to the spirit of the times. If they are the purveyors, they are also the panders of public taste; and their vaunted patronage only extends to popular subjects; while their urgent demands are sure to produce hasty manufactures. A precious work on a recondite subject, which may have consumed the life of its author, no bookseller can patronise; and whenever such a work is published, the author has rarely survived the long season of the public's neglect.

* Quarterly Review, vol. viii. p. 538.

While popular works, after some few years of celebrity, have at length been discovered not worth the repairs nor the renewal of their lease of fame, the neglected work of a nobler design rises in value and rarity. The literary work which requires the greatest skill and difficulty, and the longest labour, is not commercially valued with that hasty, spurious novelty, for which the taste of the public is craving, from the strength of its disease rather than of its appetite. ROUSSEAU observed, that his musical opera, the work of five or six weeks, brought him as much money as he had received for his "Emile," which had cost him twenty years of meditation, and three years of composition. This single fact represents a hundred. So fallacious are public opinion, and the patronage of booksellers!

Such, then, is the inadequate remuneration of a life devoted to literature; and notwithstanding the more general interest excited by its productions within the last century, it has not essentially altered their situation in society; for who is deceived by the trivial exultation of the gay sparkling scribbler who lately assured us that authors now dip their pens in silver ink-standishes, and have a valet for an amanuensis? Fashionable writers must necessarily get out of fashion; it is the inevitable fate of the material and the manufacturer. An eleemosynary fund can provide no permanent relief for the age and sorrows of the unhappy men of science and literature; and an author may even have composed a work which shall be read by the next generation as well as the present, and still be left in a state even of pauperism. These victims perish in silence! No one has attempted to suggest even a palliative for this great evil; and when I asked the greatest genius of our age to propose some relief for this general suffering, a sad and convulsive nod, a shrug that sympathised with the misery of so many brothers, and an avowal that even he could not invent one, was all that genius had to alleviate the forlorn state of the literary character*.

The only man of genius who has thrown out a hint for improving the situation of the literary man, is ADAM SMITH. In that passage in his "Wealth of Nations" to which I have already referred, he says, that "Before the invention of the art of printing, the only employment by which a man of letters could make anything by his talents was that of a *public or a private teacher*, or by communicating to other people the various and useful knowledge which he had acquired himself; and this surely is a more honourable, a more useful, and in general even a more profitable employment than that other *of writing for a bookseller*, to which the art of printing has given occasion." We see the political economist, alike insensible to the dignity of the literary character, incapable of taking a just view of its glorious avocation. To obviate the personal wants attached to the occupations of an author, he would, more effectually than skilfully, get rid of authorship itself. This is not to restore the limb, but to amputate it. It is not the preservation of existence, but its annihilation. His friends Hume and Robertson must have turned from this page humiliated and indignant. They could have supplied Adam Smith with a truer conception of the literary character, of its independence, its influence, and its glory.

I have projected a plan for the alleviation of the state of those authors who are not blessed with a patrimony. The *trade* connected with literature is carried on by men who are usually not literate, and the generality of the publishers of books, unlike all other tradesmen, are often the worst judges of their own wares. Were it practicable, as I believe it to be, that authors and men of letters could themselves be booksellers, the public would derive this immediate benefit from the scheme; a deluge of worthless or indifferent books would be turned away, and the name of the literary publisher would be a pledge for the value of every new book. Every literary man would choose his own favourite department, and we should learn from him as well as from his books.

Against this project it may be urged, that literary men are ill adapted to attend to the regular details of trade, and that the great capitalists in the book-business have not been men of literature. But this plan is not suggested for accumulating a great fortune, or for the purpose of raising up a new class of tradesmen. It is not designed to make authors wealthy, for that would inevitably extinguish great literary exertion, but only to make them independent, as the best means to preserve exertion. The details of trade are not even to reach him. The poet GESNER, a bookseller, left his *librairie* to the care of his admirable wife. His own works, the elegant editions which issued from his press, and the value of manuscripts, were the objects of his attention.

On the Continent many of the dealers in books have been literary men. At the memorable expulsion of the French Protestants on the edict of Nantes, their expatriated literary men flew to the shores of England, and the free provinces of Holland; and it was in Holland that this colony of *littérateurs* established magnificent printing-houses, and furnished Europe with editions of the native writers of France, often preferable to the originals, and even wrote the best works of the

* It was the late Sir WALTER SCOTT—if I could assign the *date* of this conversation, it would throw some light on what might be then passing in his own mind.

time. At that memorable period in our own history, when two thousand non-conformists were ejected on St. Bartholomew's day from the national establishment, the greater part were men of learning, who, deprived of their livings, were destitute of any means of existence. These scholars were compelled to look to some profitable occupation, and for the greater part they fixed on trades connected with literature; some became eminent booksellers, and continued to be voluminous writers, without finding their studies interrupted by their commercial arrangements. The details of trade must be left to others; the hand of a child can turn a vast machine, and the object here proposed would be lost, if authors sought to become merely booksellers.

Whenever the public of Europe shall witness such a new order of men among their booksellers, they will have less to read, but more to remember. Their opinions will be less fluctuating, and their knowledge will come to them with more maturity. Men of letters will fly to the house of the bookseller who in that class of literature in which he deals, will himself be not the least eminent member.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The matrimonial state of literature.—Matrimony said not to be well suited to the domestic life of genius.—Celibacy a concealed cause of the early querulousness of men of genius.—Of unhappy unions.—Not absolutely necessary that the wife should be a literary woman.—Of the docility and susceptibility of the higher female character.—A picture of a literary wife.

MATRIMONY has often been considered as a condition not well suited to the domestic life of genius, accompanied as it must be by many embarrassments for the head and the heart. It was an axiom with Fuessli, the Swiss artist, that the marriage state is incompatible with a high cultivation of the fine arts; and such appears to have been the feeling of most artists. When MICHAEL ANGELO was asked why he did not marry, he replied, "I have espoused my art; and it occasions me sufficient domestic cares, for my works shall be my children. What would Bartholomeo Ghiberti have been, had he not made the gates of St. John? His children consumed his fortune, but his gates, worthy to be the gates of Paradise, remain." The three Caraccis refused the conjugal bond on the same principle, dreading the interruptions of domestic life. Their crayons and paper were always on their dining-table. Careless of fortune, they determined never to hurry over their works in order that they might supply the ceaseless demands of a family. We discover the same principle operating in our own times. When a young painter, who had just married, told Sir Joshua that he was preparing to pursue his studies in Italy, that great painter exclaimed, "Married! then you are ruined as an artist!"

The same principle has influenced literary men. Sir THOMAS BODLEY had a smart altercation with his first librarian, insisting that he should not marry, maintaining its absurdity in the man who had the perpetual care of a public library; and Woodward left as one of the express conditions of his lecturer, that he was not to be a married man. They imagined that their private affairs would interfere with their public duties. PEIRESC, the great French collector, refused marriage, convinced that the cares of a family were too absorbing for the freedom necessary to literary pursuits, and claimed likewise a sacrifice of fortune incompatible with his great designs. BOYLE, who would not suffer his studies to be interrupted by "household affairs," lived as a boarder with his sister, Lady Ranelagh. Newton, Locke, Leibnitz, Bayle, and Hobbes, and Hume, and Gibbon, and Adam Smith, decided for celibacy. These great authors placed their happiness in their celebrity.

This debate, for the present topic has sometimes warmed into one, is in truth ill adapted for controversy. The heart is more concerned in its issue than any espoused doctrine terminating in partial views. Look into the domestic annals of genius—observe the variety of positions into which the literary character is thrown in the nuptial state. Cynicism will not always obtain a sullen triumph, nor prudence always be allowed to calculate away some of the richer feelings of our nature. It is not an axiom that literary characters must necessarily institute a new order of celibacy. The sentence of the apostle pronounces, that "the forbidding to marry is a doctrine of devils." WESLEY, who published "Thoughts on a Single Life," advised some "to remain single for the kingdom of heaven's sake; but the precept," he adds, "is not for the many." So indecisive have been the opinions of the most curious inquirers concerning the matrimonial state, whenever a great destination has engaged their consideration.

One position we may assume, that the studies, and even the happiness of the pursuits of men of genius, are powerfully influenced by the domestic associate of their lives.

They rarely pass through the age of love without its passion. Even their Delias and their Amandas are often the shadows of some real object; for as Shakespeare's experience told him,

> "Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
> Until his ink were temper'd with love's sighs."

Their imagination is perpetually colouring those pictures of domestic happiness on which they

delight to dwell. He who is no husband sighs for that tenderness which is at once bestowed and received; and tears will start in the eyes of him who, in becoming a child among children, yet feels that he is no father! These deprivations have usually been the concealed cause of the querulous melancholy of the literary character.

Such was the real occasion of SHENSTONE's unhappiness. In early life he had been captivated by a young lady adapted to be both the muse and the wife of the poet, and their mutual sensibility lasted for some years. It lasted until she died. It was in parting from her that he first sketched his "Pastoral Ballad." SHENSTONE had the fortitude to refuse marriage. His spirit could not endure that she should participate in that life of self-privations to which he was doomed; but his heart was not locked up in the ice of celibacy, and his plaintive love-songs and elegies flowed from no fictitious source. "It is long since," says he, "I have considered myself as *undone*. The world will not perhaps consider me in that light entirely till I have married my maid."

THOMSON met a reciprocal passion in his Amanda, while the full tenderness of his heart was ever wasting itself like waters in a desert. As we have been made little acquainted with this part of the history of the poet of the Seasons, I shall give his own description of those deep feelings from a manuscript letter written to Mallet. "To turn my eyes a softer way, to you know who—absence sighs it to me. What is my heart made of? a soft system of low nerves, too sensible for my quiet—capable of being very happy or very unhappy, I am afraid the last will prevail. Lay your hand upon a kindred heart, and despise me not. I know not what it is, but she dwells upon my thought in a mingled sentiment, which is the sweetest, the most intimately pleasing the soul can receive, and which I would wish never to want towards some dear object or another. To have always some secret darling idea to which one can still have recourse amidst the noise and nonsense of the world, and which never fails to touch us in the most exquisite manner, is an art of happiness that fortune cannot deprive us of. This may be called romantic; but whatever the cause is, the effect is really felt. Pray, when you write, tell me when you saw her, and with the pure eye of a friend, when you see her again, whisper that I am her most humble servant."

Even POPE was enamoured of a "scornful lady;" and, as Johnson observed, "polluted his will with female resentment." JOHNSON himself, we are told by one who knew him, "had always a metaphysical passion for one princess or other,—the rustic Lucy Porter, or the haughty Molly Aston, or the sublimated methodistic Hill Boothby; and, lastly, the more charming Mrs. Thrale." Even in his advanced age, at the height of his celebrity, we hear his cries of lonely wretchedness. "I want every comfort; my life is very solitary and very cheerless. Let me know that I have yet a friend—let us be kind to one another." But the "kindness" of distant friends is like the polar sun—too far removed to warm us. Those who have eluded the individual tenderness of the female, are tortured by an aching void in their feelings. The stoic AKENSIDE, in his "Odes," has preserved the history of a life of genius in a series of his own feelings. One entitled, "At Study," closes with these memorable lines:—

"Me though no peculiar fair
Touches with a lover's care;
Though the pride of my desire
Asks immortal friendship's name,
Asks the palm of honest fame
And the old heroic lyre;
Though the day have smoothly gone,
Or to letter'd leisure known,
Or in social duty spent;
Yet at the eve my lonely breast
Seeks in vain for perfect rest,
Languishes for true content."

If ever a man of letters lived in a state of energy and excitement which might raise him above the atmosphere of social love, it was assuredly the enthusiast, THOMAS HOLLIS, who, solely devoted to literature and to republicanism, was occupied in furnishing Europe and America with editions of his favourite authors. He would not marry, lest marriage should interrupt the labours of his platonic politics. But his extraordinary memoirs, while they show an intrepid mind in a robust frame, bear witness to the self-tormentor who had trodden down the natural bonds of domestic life. Hence the deep "dejection of his spirits;" those incessant cries, that he has "no one to advise, assist, or cherish those magnanimous pursuits *in* him." At length he retreated into the country, in utter hopelessness. "I go not into the country for attentions to agriculture as such, nor attentions of interest of any kind, which I have ever despised as such; but as a *used man*, to pass the remainder of a life in tolerable sanity and quiet, after having given up the flower of it, voluntarily, day, week, month, year after year, successive to each other, to public service, and being no longer able to sustain, in *body or mind*, the labours that I have chosen to go through without falling speedily into *the greatest disorders*, and it might be *imbecility itself*. This is not colouring, but the exact plain truth."

"Poor moralist, and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets."

Assuredly it would not have been a question whether these literary characters should have married, had not MONTAIGNE, when a widower, declared that "he would not marry a second time, though it were wisdom itself;" but the airy Gascon has not disclosed how far *Madame* was concerned in this anathema.

If the literary man unite himself to a woman whose taste and whose temper are adverse to his pursuits, he must courageously prepare for a martyrdom. Should a female mathematician be united to a poet, it is probable that she would be left amidst her abstractions, to demonstrate to herself how many a specious diagram fails when brought into its mechanical operation; or discovering the infinite varieties of a curve, she might take occasion to deduce her husband's versatility. If she become as jealous of his books as other wives might be of his mistresses, she may act the virago even over his innocent papers. The wife of Bishop COOPER, while her husband was employed on his Lexicon, one day consigned the volume of many years to the flames, and obliged that scholar to begin a second siege of Troy in a second Lexicon. The wife of WHITELOCKE often destroyed his MSS., and the marks of her nails have come down to posterity in the numerous *lacerations* still gaping in his "Memorials." The learned Sir HENRY SAVILLE, who devoted more than half his life, and nearly ten thousand pounds, to his magnificent edition of St. Chrysostom, led a very uneasy life between the saint and her ladyship. What with her tenderness for him, and her own want of amusement, Saint Chrysostom, it appears, incurred more than one danger.

Genius has not preserved itself from the errors and infirmities of matrimonial connexions. The energetic character of DANTE could neither soften nor control the asperity of his lady; and when that great poet lived in exile, she never cared to see him more, though he was the father of her six children. The internal state of the house of DOMENICHINO afflicted that great artist with many sorrows. He had married a beauty of high birth, and extreme haughtiness, and of the most avaricious disposition. When at Naples, he himself dreaded lest the avaricious passion of his wife should not be able to resist the offers she received to poison him, and he was compelled to provide and dress his own food. It is believed that he died of poison. What a picture has Passeri left of the domestic interior of this great artist! *Così fra mille crepacuori morì uno de' più eccellenti artefici del mundo; che oltre al suo valore pittorico avrebbe più d'ogni altri maritato di viver sempre per l'onestà personale.* "So perished, amidst a thousand heart-breakings, the most excellent of artists; who besides his worth as a painter, deserved as much as any one to have lived for his excellence as a man."

MILTON carried nothing of the greatness of his mind in the choice of his wives. His first wife was the object of sudden fancy. He left the metropolis, and unexpectedly returned a married man, and united to a woman of such uncongenial dispositions, that the romp was frightened at the literary habits of the great poet, found his house solitary, beat his nephews, and ran away after a single month's residence! To this circumstance we owe his famous treatise on Divorce; and a party (by no means extinct), who having made as ill choices in their wives, were for divorcing, as fast as they had been for marrying, calling themselves *Miltonists*.

When we find that MOLIERE, so skilful in human life, married a girl from his own troop, who made him experience all those bitter disgusts and ridiculous embarrassments which he himself played off at the theatre; that ADDISON'S fine taste in morals and in life could suffer the ambition of a courtier to prevail with himself to seek a countess, whom he describes under the stormy character of Oceana, and who drove him contemptuously into solitude, and shortened his days; and that STEELE, warm and thoughtless, was united to a cold precise "Miss Prue," as he himself calls her, and from whom he never parted without bickerings; in all these cases we censure the great men, not their wives*. ROUSSEAU has honestly confessed his error. He had united himself to a low illiterate woman; and when he retreated into solitude, he felt the weight which he carried with him. He laments that he had not educated his wife: "In a docile age, I could have adorned her mind with talents and knowledge, which would have more closely united us in retirement. We should not then have felt the intolerable tedium of a tête-à-tête; it is in solitude one feels the advantage of living with another who can think." Thus Rousseau confesses the fatal error, and indicates the right principle.

Yet it seems not absolutely necessary for the domestic happiness of the literary character, that his wife should be a literary woman. TYCHO BRAHE, noble by birth as well as genius, married the daughter of a peasant. By which means that great man obtained two points essential for his abstract pursuits; he acquired an obedient wife, and freed himself of his noble relatives, who would no longer hold an intercourse with the man who was spreading their family honours into more ages than perhaps they could have traced them backwards. The lady of WIELAND was a pleasing domestic person, who, without reading her husband's works, knew he was a great poet. Wieland

* See "Curiosities of Literature," for anecdotes of "Literary Wives."

was apt to exercise his imagination in declamatory invectives and bitter amplifications; and the writer of this account, in perfect German taste, assures us, "that many of his felicities of diction were thus struck out at a heat." During this frequent operation of his genius, the placable temper of Mrs. Wieland overcame the orgasm of the German bard, merely by persisting in her admiration and her patience. When the burst was over, Wieland himself was so charmed by her docility, that he usually closed with giving up all his opinions.

There is another sort of homely happiness, aptly described in the plain words of Bishop Newton. He found "the study of sacred and classic authors ill agreed with butchers' and bakers' bills;" and when the prospect of a bishopric opened on him, "more servants, more entertainments, a better table, &c." it became necessary to look out for "some clever sensible woman to be his wife, who would lay out his money to the best advantage, and be careful and tender of his health; a friend and companion at all hours, and who would be happier in staying at home than be perpetually gadding abroad." Such are the wives not adapted to be the votaries, but who may be the faithful companions through life, even of a man of genius.

But in the character of the higher female we may discover a constitutional faculty of docility and enthusiasm, which has varied with the genius of different ages. It is the opinion of an elegant metaphysician, that the mind of the female adopts and familiarises itself with ideas more easily than that of man, and hence the facility with which the sex contract or lose habits, and accommodate their minds to new situations. Politics, war, and learning, are equally objects of attainment to their delightful susceptibility. Love has the fancied transparency of the cameleon. When the art of government directed the feelings of a woman, we behold Aspasia, eloquent with the genius of Pericles, instructing the Archons; Portia, the wife of the republican Brutus, devouring burning coals; and the wife of Lucan, transcribing and correcting the Pharsalia, before the bust of the poet, which she had placed on her bed, that his very figure might never be absent. When universities were opened to the sex, they acquired academic glory. The wives of military men have shared in the perils of the field; or like Anna Comnena and our Mrs. Hutchinson, have become even their historians. In the age of love and sympathy, the female often receives an indelible pliancy from her literary associate. His pursuits become the objects of her thoughts, and he observes his own taste reflected in his family; much less through his own influence, for his solitary labours often preclude him from forming them, than by that image of his own genius —the mother of his children! The subjects, the very books which enter into his literary occupation, are cherished by her imagination; a feeling finely opened by the lady of the author of Sandford and Merton: "My ideas of my husband," she said, "are so much associated with his *books*, that to part with them would be as it were breaking some of the last ties which still connect me with so beloved an object. The being in the midst of books he has been accustomed to read, and which contain his *marks* and *notes*, will still give him *a sort of existence* with *me*. Unintelligible as such fond chimeras may appear to many people, I am persuaded they are not so to you."

With what simplicity Meta Mollers, the wife of Klopstock, in her German-English, describes to Richardson, the novelist, the manner in which she passes her day with her poet! she tells him, that "she is always present at the birth of the young verses, which begin by fragments, here and there, of a subject with which his soul is just then filled. Persons who live as we do, have no need of two chambers; we are always in the same: I with my little work, still! still! only regarding sometimes my husband's face, which is so venerable at that time with tears of devotion, and all the sublimity of the subject—my husband reading me his young verses, and suffering my criticisms."

The picture of a literary wife of antiquity has descended to us, touched by the domestic pencil of genius, in the susceptible Calphurnia, the lady of the younger Pliny. "Her affection for me," he says, "has given her a turn to books: her passion will increase with our days, for it is not my youth or my person, which time gradually impairs, but my reputation and my glory, of which she is enamoured."

I have been told that Buffon, notwithstanding his favourite seclusion of his old tower in his garden, acknowledged to a friend, that his lady had a considerable influence over his compositions: "Often," said he, "when I cannot please myself, and am impatient at the disappointment, Madame de Buffon reanimates my exertion, or withdraws me to repose for a short interval; I return to my pen refreshed, and aided by her advice."

Gessner declared that whatever were his talents, the person who had most contributed to develop them was his wife. She is unknown to the public; but the history of the mind of such a woman is discovered in the "Letters of Gessner and his Family." While Gessner gave himself up entirely to his favourite arts, drawing, painting, etching, and poetry, his wife would often reanimate a genius that was apt to despond in its attempts, and often exciting him to new productions, her sure and delicate taste was attentively consulted

by the poet-painter—but she combined the most practical good sense with the most feeling imagination. This forms the rareness of the character; for this same woman, who united with her husband in the education of their children, to relieve him from the interruptions of common business, carried on alone the concerns of his house in *la librairie*. Her correspondence with her son, a young artist travelling for his studies, opens what an old poet comprehensively terms "a gathered mind."—Imagine a woman attending to the domestic economy, and to the commercial details, yet withdrawing out of this business of life into the more elevated pursuits of her husband, and at the same time combining with all this the cares and counsels which she bestowed on her son to form the artist and the man.

To know this incomparable woman we must hear her. "Consider your father's precepts as oracles of wisdom; they are the result of the experience he has collected, not only of life, but of that art which he has acquired simply by his own industry." She would not have her son suffer his strong affection to herself to absorb all other sentiments. "Had you remained at home, and been habituated under your mother's auspices to employments merely domestic, what advantage would you have acquired? I own we should have passed some delightful winter evenings together; but your love for the arts, and my ambition to see my sons as much distinguished for their talents as their virtues, would have been a constant source of regret at your passing your time in a manner so little worthy of you."

How profound is her observation on the strong but confined attachments of a youth of genius! "I have frequently remarked, with some regret, the excessive attachment you indulge towards those who see and feel as you do yourself, and the total neglect with which you seem to treat every one else. I should reproach a man with such a fault who was destined to pass his life in a small and unvarying circle; but in an artist, who has a great object in view, and whose country is the whole world, this disposition seems to me likely to produce a great number of inconveniences. Alas! my son, the life you have hitherto led in your father's house has been in fact a pastoral life, and not such a one as was necessary for the education of a man whose destiny summons him to the world."

And when her son, after meditating on some of the most glorious productions of art, felt himself, as he says, "disheartened and cast down at the unattainable superiority of the artist, and that it was only by reflecting on the immense labour and continued efforts which such masterpieces must have required, that I regained my courage and my ardour," she observes, "This passage, my dear son, is to me as precious as gold, and I send it to you again, because I wish you to impress it strongly on your mind. The remembrance of this may also be a useful preservative from too great confidence in your abilities, to which a warm imagination may sometimes be liable, or from the despondence you might occasionally feel from the contemplation of grand originals. Continue, therefore, my dear son, to form a sound judgment and a pure taste from your own observations: your mind, while yet young and flexible, may receive whatever impressions you wish. Be careful that your abilities do not inspire in you too much confidence, lest it should happen to you as it has to many others, that they have never possessed any greater merit than that of having good abilities."

One more extract, to preserve an incident which may touch the heart of genius. This extraordinary woman, whose characteristic is that of strong sense combined with delicacy of feeling, would check her German sentimentality at the moment she was betraying those emotions in which the imagination is so powerfully mixed up with the associated feelings. Arriving at their cottage at Sihlwald, she proceeds—"On entering the parlour three small pictures, painted by you, met my eyes. I passed some time in contemplating them. It is now a year, thought I, since I saw him trace these pleasing forms; he whistled and sang, and I saw them grow under his pencil; now he is far, far from us.—In short, I had the weakness to press my lips on one of these pictures. You well know, my dear son, that I am not much addicted to scenes of a sentimental turn; but to-day, while I considered your works, I could not restrain this little impulse of maternal feelings. Do not, however, be apprehensive that the tender affection of a mother will ever lead me too far, or that I shall suffer my mind to be too powerfully impressed with the painful sensations to which your absence gives birth. My reason convinces me that it is for your welfare that you are now in a place where your abilities will have opportunities of unfolding, and where you can become great in your art."

Such was the incomparable wife and mother of the GESSNERS! Will it now be a question whether matrimony be incompatible with the cultivation of the arts? A wife who reanimates the drooping genius of her husband, and a mother who is inspired by the ambition of beholding her sons eminent, is she not the real being which the ancients personified in their Muse?

CHAPTER XIX.

Literary friendships.—In early life.—Different from those of men of the world.—They suffer an unrestrained communication of their ideas, and bear reprimands and exhortations.—Unity of feelings.—A sympathy not of manners but of feelings.—Admit of dissimilar characters.—Their peculiar glory.—Their sorrow.

AMONG the virtues which literature inspires, is often that of the most romantic friendship. The delirium of love, and even its lighter caprices, are incompatible with the pursuits of the student; but to feel friendship like a passion is necessary to the mind of genius alternately elated and depressed, ever prodigal of feeling and excursive in knowledge.

The qualities which constitute literary friendship, compared with those of men of the world, must render it a sentiment as rare as love itself, which it resembles in that intellectual tenderness in which both so deeply participate.

Born "in the dews of their youth," this friendship will not expire on their tomb. In the school or the college this immortality begins; and engaged in similar studies, should even one excel the other, he will find in him the protector of his fame; as ADDISON did in STEELE, WEST in GRAY, and GRAY in MASON. Thus PETRARCH was the guide of Boccaccio, thus BOCCACCIO became the defender of his master's genius. Perhaps friendship is never more intense than in an intercourse of minds of ready counsels and inspiring ardours. United in the same pursuits, but directed by an unequal experience, the imperceptible superiority interests, without mortifying. It is a counsel, it is an aid; in whatever form it shows itself, it has nothing of the malice of rivalry.

A beautiful picture of such a friendship among men of genius offers itself in the history of MIGNARD, the great French painter, and DU FRESNOY, the great critic of the art itself. DU FRESNOY, abandoned in utter scorn by his stern father, an apothecary, for his entire devotion to his seductive art, lived at Rome in voluntary poverty, till MIGNARD, his old fellow-student, arrived, when they became known by the name of "the inseparables." The talents of the friends were different, but their studies were the same. Their days melted away together in drawing from the ancient statues and the basso-rilievos, in studying in the galleries of paintings, or among the villas which embellish the environs of Rome. One roof sheltered them, and one table supplied their sober meal. Light were the slumbers which closed each day, each the pleasing image of the former. But this remarkable friendship was not a simple sentiment which limited the views of "the Inseparables," for with them it was a perpetual source of mutual usefulness. They gave accounts to each other of whatever they observed, and carefully noted their own defects. DU FRESNOY, so critical in the theory of the art, was unsuccessful in the practical parts. His delight in poetical composition had retarded the progress of his pictorial powers. Not having been taught the handling of his pencil, he worked with difficulty; but MIGNARD succeeded in giving him a freer command and a more skilful touch; while DU FRESNOY, who was the more literary man, enriched the invention of MIGNARD by reading to him an Ode of Anacreon or Horace, a passage from the Iliad or Odyssey, or the Æneid, or the Jerusalem Delivered, which offered subjects for the artist's invention, who would throw out five or six different sketches on the same subject; a habit which so highly improved the inventive powers of MIGNARD, that he could compose a fine picture with playful facility. Thus they lived together, mutually enlightening each other. MIGNARD supplied DU FRESNOY with all that fortune had refused him; and, when he was no more, perpetuated his fame, which he felt was a portion of his own celebrity, by publishing his posthumous poem, *De Arte Graphica* *; a poem, which Mason has made readable by his versification, and Reynolds even interesting by his invaluable commentary.

In the poem COWLEY composed on the death of his friend HARVEY, this stanza opens a pleasing scene of two young literary friends engaged in their midnight studies.

"Say, for you saw us, ye immortal lights!
How oft unwearied have we spent the nights,
Till the Ledæan stars, so famed for love,
Wonder'd at us from above.
We spent them not in toys, in lust, or wine;
But search of deep philosophy,
Wit, eloquence, and poetry;
Arts which I loved, for they, my friend, were thine."

Touched by a personal knowledge of this union of genius and affection, even MALONE commemorates, with unusual warmth, the literary friendships of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and with a felicity of fancy not often indulged, has raised an unforced parallel between the bland wisdom of Sir Joshua and the "mitis sapientia Lælii." "What the illustrious Scipio was to Lælius, was the all-knowing and all-accomplished BURKE to REYNOLDS;" and what the elegant Lælius was to his master Panætius, whom he gratefully protected, and to his companion the poet Lucilius, whom he patronised, was REYNOLDS to JOHNSON, of whom he was the scholar and friend, and to GOLDSMITH, whom he loved and aided.

* La Vie de Pierre Mignard, par L'Abbé de Monville, the work of an amateur.

Count AZARA mourns with equal tenderness and force over the memory of the artist and the writer MENGS. "The most tender friendships would call forth tears in this sad duty of scattering flowers on his tomb; but the shade of my extinct friend warns me not to be satisfied with dropping flowers and tears—they are useless; and I would rather accomplish his wishes, in making known the author and his works."

I am infinitely delighted by a circumstance communicated to me by one who had visited GLEIM, the German poet, who seems to have been a creature made up altogether of sensibility. His many and illustrious friends he had never forgotten, and to the last hour of a life prolonged beyond his eightieth year, he possessed those interior feelings which can make even an old man an enthusiast. There seemed for GLEIM to be no extinction in friendship when the friend was no more; and he had invented a singular mode of gratifying his feelings of literary friendships. The visitor found the old man in a room of which the wainscot was panelled, as we still see among us in ancient houses. In every panel GLEIM had inserted the portrait of a friend, and the apartment was crowded. "You see," said the grey-haired poet, "that I never have lost a friend, and am sitting always among them."

Such friendships can never be the lot of men of the world; for the source of these lies in the interior affections and the intellectual feelings. FONTENELLE describes with characteristic delicacy the conversations of such literary friends: "Our days passed like moments; thanks to those pleasures, which, however, are not included in those which are commonly called pleasures." The friendships of the men of society move on the principle of personal interest, but interest can easily separate the interested; or they are cherished to relieve themselves from the listlessness of existence, but as weariness is contagious, the contact of the propagator is watched. Men of the world may look on each other with the same countenances, but not with the same hearts. In the common mart of life intimacies may be found which terminate in complaint and contempt; the more they know one another, the less is their mutual esteem: the feeble mind quarrels with one still more imbecile than itself; the dissolute riot with the dissolute, and they despise their companions, while they too have themselves become despicable.

Literary friendships are marked by another peculiarity; the true philosophical spirit has learned to bear that shock of contrary opinions which minds less meditative are unequal to encounter. Men of genius live in the unrestrained communication of their ideas, and confide even their caprices with a freedom which sometimes startles ordinary observers. We see literary men the most opposite in dispositions and opinions, deriving from each other that fulness of knowledge which unfolds the certain, the probable, the doubtful. Topics which break the world into factions and sects; and truths which ordinary men are doomed only to hear from a malignant adversary, they gather from a friend! If neither yields up his opinions to the other, they are at least certain of silence and a hearing; but usually

"The wise, new wisdom from the wise acquire."

This generous freedom, which spares neither reprimands nor exhortation, has often occurred in the intercourse of literary men. HUME and ROBERTSON were engaged in the same studies, but with very opposite principles; yet Robertson declined writing the English history, which he aspired to do, lest it should injure the plans of Hume; a noble sacrifice!

Politics once divided Boccaccio and Petrarch. The poet of Valchiusa had never forgiven the Florentines for their persecution of his father. By the mediation of BOCCACCIO they now offered to reinstate PETRARCH in his patrimony and his honours. Won over by the tender solicitude of his friend, PETRARCH had consented to return to his country; but with his usual inconstancy of temper, he had again excused himself to the senate of Florence, and again retreated to his solitude. Nor was this all; for the Visconti of Milan had by their flattery and promises seduced PETRARCH to their court; a court, the avowed enemy of Florence. BOCCACCIO, for the honour of literature, of his friend, of his country, indignantly heard of PETRARCH'S fatal decision, and addressed him by a letter, the most interesting perhaps which ever passed between two literary friends, who were torn asunder by the momentary passions of the vulgar, but who were still united by that immortal friendship which literature inspires, and by a reverence for that posterity which they knew would concern itself with their affairs.

It was on a journey to Ravenna that BOCCACCIO first heard the news of PETRARCH'S abandonment of his country, when he thus vehemently addressed his brother-genius.

"I would be silent, but I cannot: my reverence commands silence, but my indignation speaks. How has it happened that Silvanus (under this name he conceals Petrarch) has forgotten his dignity, the many conversations we had together on the state of Italy, his hatred of the archbishop (Visconti), his love of solitude and freedom, so necessary for study, and has resolved to imprison the Muses at that court? Whom may we trust again, if Silvanus, who once branded *Il Visconti* as the Cruel, a Polyphemus, a Cyclop, has avowed

himself his friend, and placed his neck under the yoke of him whose audacity, and pride, and tyranny, he so deeply abhorred? How has Visconti obtained that which King Robert, which the pontiff, the emperor, the King of France could not? Am I to conclude that you accepted this favour from a disdain of your fellow-citizens, who once indeed scorned you, but who have reinstated you in the paternal patrimony of which you had been deprived? I do not disapprove of a just indignation; but I take Heaven to witness, that I believe that no man, whoever he may be, rightly and honestly can labour against his country, whatever be the injury he has received. You will gain nothing by opposing me in this opinion; for if stirred up by the most just indignation, you become the friend of the enemy of your country, unquestionably you will not spur him on to war, nor assist him by your arm, nor by your counsel; yet how can you avoid rejoicing with him, when you hear of the ruins, the conflagrations, the imprisonments, death, and rapine, which he shall spread among us?"

Such was the bold appeal to elevated feelings, and such the keen reproach inspired by that confidential freedom which can only exist in the intercourse of great minds. The literary friendship, or rather adoration of Boccaccio for Petrarch, was not bartered at the cost of his patriotism: and it is worthy of our notice that Petrarch, whose personal injuries from an ungenerous republic were rankling in his mind, and whom even the eloquence of Boccaccio could not disunite from his protector Visconti, yet received the ardent reproaches of his friend without anger, though not without maintaining the freedom of his own opinions. Petrarch replied, that the anxiety of Boccaccio for the liberty of his friend was a thought most grateful to him; but he assured Boccaccio that he preserved his freedom, even although it appeared that he bowed under a hard yoke. He hoped that he had not to learn to serve in his old age, he, who had hitherto studied to preserve his independence; but in respect to servitude, he did not know whom it was most displeasing to serve, a tyrant like Visconti, or with Boccaccio, a people of tyrants*.

The unity of feeling is displayed in such memorable associates as Beaumont and Fletcher; whose labours are so combined, that no critic can detect the mingled production of either; and whose lives are so closely united, that no biographer can compose the memoirs of the one without running into the history of the other. Their days were interwoven as their verses. Montaigne and Charron, in the eyes of posterity, are rivals, but such literary friendship knows no rivalry. Such was Montaigne's affection for Charron, that he requested him by his will to bear the arms of the Montaignes; and Charron evinced his gratitude to the manes of his departed friend, by leaving his fortune to the sister of Montaigne.

How pathetically Erasmus mourns over the death of his beloved Sir Thomas More!—"*In Moro mihi videor extinctus*,"—"I seem to see myself extinct in More." It was a melancholy presage of his own death, which shortly after followed. The Doric sweetness and simplicity of old Isaac Walton, the angler, were reflected in a mind as clear and generous, when Charles Cotton continued the feelings, rather than the little work of Walton. Metastasio and Farinelli called each other *il Gemello*, the Twin: and both delighted to trace the resemblance of their lives and fates, and the perpetual alliance of the verse and the voice. The famous John Baptista Porta had a love of the mysterious parts of sciences, such as physiognomy, natural magic, the cryptical arts of writing, and projected many curious inventions which astonished his age, and which we have carried to perfection. This extraordinary man saw his fame somewhat diminished by a rumour that his brother John Vincent had a great share in the composition of his works; but this never disturbed him, and Peiresc, in an interesting account of a visit to this celebrated Neapolitan, observed, that though now aged and grey-haired, he treated his younger brother as a son. These single-hearted brothers, who would not marry that they might never be separated, knew of but one fame, and that was the fame of Porta.

Goguet, the author of "The Origin of the Arts and Sciences," bequeathed his MSS. and his books to his friend Fugere, with whom he had long united his affections and his studies, that his surviving friend might proceed with them: but the author had died of a slow and painful disorder, which Fugere had watched by his side, in silent despair. The sight of those MSS. and books was the friend's death-stroke; half his soul, which had once given them animation, was parted from him, and a few weeks terminated his own days. When Lloyd heard of the death of Churchill, he neither wished to survive him, nor did. The Abbé de St. Pierre gave an interesting proof of literary friendship for Varignon, the geometrician. They were of congenial dispositions, and St. Pierre, when he went to Paris, could not endure to part with Varignon, who was too poor to accompany him; and St. Pierre was not rich. A certain income, however moderate, was necessary for the tranquil pursuits of geometry. St. Pierre presented Varignon with a portion of his small

* These interesting letters are preserved in Count Baldelli's Life of Boccaccio, p. 115.

income, accompanied by that delicacy of feeling which men of genius who know each other can best conceive: "I do not give it you," said St. Pierre, "as a salary but as an annuity, that you may be independent, and quit me when you dislike me." The same circumstance occurred between AKENSIDE and DYSON. Dyson, when the poet was in great danger of adding one more illustrious name to the "Calamities of Authors," interposed between him and ill-fortune, by allowing him an annuity of three hundred a-year; and, when he found the fame of his literary friend attacked, although not in the habit of composition, he published a defence of his poetical and philosophical character. The name and character of Dyson have been suffered to die away, without a single tribute of even biographical sympathy; as that of LONGUEVILLE, the modest patron of BUTLER, in whom that great political satirist found what the careless ingratitude of a court had denied: but in the record of literary glory, the patron's name should be inscribed by the side of the literary character; for the public incurs an obligation whenever a man of genius is protected.

The statesman Fouquet, deserted by all other, witnessed LA FONTAINE hastening every literary man to the prison-gate. Many have inscribed their works to their disgraced patron, as POPE did so nobly to the Earl of Oxford in the Tower;

"When interest calls off all her sneaking train,
And all the obliged desert, and all the vain,
They wait, or to the scaffold, or the cell,
When the last lingering friend has bid farewell."

Literary friendship is a sympathy not of manners, but of feelings. The personal character may happen to be very opposite: the vivacious may be loved by the melancholic, and the wit by the man of learning. He who is vehement and vigorous, will feel himself a double man by the side of the friend who is calm and subtle. When we observe such friendships, we are apt to imagine that they are not real because the characters are dissimilar; but it is their common tastes and pursuits which form a bond of union. POMPONIUS LÆTUS, so called from his natural good-humour, was the close friend of HERMOLAUS BARBARUS, whose saturnine and melancholy dispositions he often exhilarated; the warm, impetuous LUTHER was the beloved friend of the mild and amiable MELANCTHON; the caustic BOILEAU was the companion of RACINE and MOLIERE; and France, perhaps, owes the *chefs-d'œuvre* of her tragic and her comic poet to her satirist. The delicate taste and the refining ingenuity of HURD, only attached him the more to the impetuous and dogmatic WARBURTON. No men could be more opposite in personal character than the careless, gay, and hasty STEELE, and the cautious, serious, and elegant ADDISON; yet no literary friendship was more fortunate than their union.

One glory is reserved for literary friendship. The friendship of a great name, indicates the greatness of the character who appeals to it. When SYDENHAM mentioned, as a proof of the excellence of his method of treating acute diseases, that it had received the approbation of his illustrious friend LOCKE, the philosopher's opinion contributed to the physician's success.

Such have been the friendships of great literary characters; but too true it is, that they have not always contributed thus largely to their mutual happiness. The querulous lament of GLEIM to KLOPSTOCK is too generally participated. As Gleim lay on his death-bed, he addressed the great bard of Germany—"I am dying, dear Klopstock; and as a dying man will I say, in this world we have not lived long enough together and for each other; but in vain would we now recal the past!" What tenderness in the reproach! What self-accusation in its modesty!

CHAPTER XX.

The literary and the personal character.—The personal dispositions of an author may be the reverse of those which appear in his writings.—Erroneous conceptions of the character of distant authors.—Paradoxical appearances in the history of Genius.—Why the character of the man may be opposite to that of his writings.

ARE the personal dispositions of an author discoverable in his writings as those of an artist are imagined to appear in his works, where Michael Angelo is always great, and Raphael ever graceful?

Is the moralist a moral man? Is he malignant who publishes caustic satires? Is he a libertine who composes loose poems? And is he whose imagination delights in terror and in blood, the very monster he paints?

Many licentious writers have led chaste lives. LA MOTHE LE VAYER wrote two works of a free nature; yet his was the unblemished life of a retired sage. BAYLE is the too faithful compiler of impurities, but he resisted the voluptuousness of the senses as much as Newton. LA FONTAINE wrote tales fertile in intrigues, yet the "bonhomme" has not left on record a single ingenious amour of his own. The Queen of NAVARRE's Tales are gross imitations of Boccaccio's; but she herself was a princess of irreproachable habits, and had given proof of the most rigid virtue; but stories of intrigues, told in a natural style, formed the fashionable literature of the day, and the genius of the female writer was amused in becoming an historian without being an actor. FORTI-

GUERRA, the author of the Ricciardetto, abounds with loose and licentious descriptions, and yet neither his manners nor his personal character were stained by the offending freedom of his inventions. SMOLLETT's character is immaculate; yet he has described two scenes which offend even in the licence of imagination. COWLEY, who boasts with such gaiety of the versatility of his passion among so many mistresses, wanted even the confidence to address one. Thus, licentious writers may be very chaste persons. The imagination may be a volcano, while the heart is an Alp of ice.

Turn to the moralist—there we find Seneca, a usurer of seven millions, writing on moderate desires on a table of gold. SALLUST, who so eloquently declaims against the licentiousness of the age, was repeatedly accused in the senate of public and habitual debaucheries; and when this inveigher against the spoilers of provinces attained to a remote government, he pillaged like Verres. That "DEMOSTHENES was more capable of recommending than of imitating the virtues of our ancestors," is the observation of Plutarch. LUCIAN, when young, declaimed against the friendship of the great, as another name for servitude; but when his talents procured him a situation under the emperor, he facetiously compared himself to those quacks, who themselves plagued by a perpetual cough, offer to sell an infallible remedy for one. Sir THOMAS MORE, in his Utopia, declares that no man ought to be punished for his religion; yet he became a fierce persecutor, flogging and racking men for his own "true faith." At the moment the poet ROUSSEAU was giving versions of the Psalms, full of unction, as our Catholic neighbours express it, he was profaning the same pen with infamous epigrams; and an erotic poet of our times has composed night-hymns in churchyards with the same ardour with which he poured forth Anacreontics. Napoleon said of Bernardin St. Pierre, whose writings breathe the warm principles of humanity and social happiness in every page, that he was one of the worst private characters in France. I have heard this from other quarters; it startles one! The pathetic genius of STERNE played about his head, but never reached his heart. Cardinal RICHELIEU wrote "The Perfection of a Christian, or the Life of a Christian;" yet was he an utter stranger to Gospel maxims; and FREDERICK THE GREAT, when young, published his Anti-Machiavel, and deceived the world by the promise of a pacific reign. This military genius protested against those political arts which he afterwards adroitly practised, uniting the lion's head with the fox's tail—and thus himself realising the political monster of Machiavel!

And thus also is it with the personal dispositions of an author, which may be quite the reverse from those which appear in his writings. Johnson would not believe that HORACE was a happy man because his verses were cheerful, any more than he could think POPE so, because the poet is continually informing us of it. It surprised Spence when Pope told him that ROWE the tragic poet, whom he had considered so solemn a personage, "would laugh all day long, and do nothing else but laugh." Lord Kaimes says, that ARBUTHNOT must have been a great genius, for he exceeded Swift and Addison in humorous painting; although we are informed he had nothing of that peculiarity in his character. YOUNG, who is constantly contemning preferment in his writings, was all his life pining after it; and the conversation of the sombrous author of the "Night Thoughts" was of the most volatile kind, abounding with trivial puns. He was one of the first who subscribed to the assembly at Wellwyn. Mrs. Carter, who greatly admired his sublime poetry, expressing her surprise at his social converse, he replied,—"Madam, there is much difference between writing and talking."

MOLIERE, on the contrary, whose humour is so perfectly comic, and even ludicrous, was thoughtful and serious, and even melancholy. His strongly-featured physiognomy exhibits the face of a great tragic, rather than of a great comic poet. Boileau called Molière "The contemplative man." Those who make the world laugh, often themselves laugh the least. A famous and witty harlequin of France was overcome with hypochondriasm, and consulted a physician, who, after inquiring about his malady, told his miserable patient, that he knew of no other medicine for him than to take frequent doses of Carlin—"I am Carlin himself," exclaimed the melancholy man in despair. BURTON, the pleasant and vivacious author of "The Anatomy of Melancholy," of whom it is noticed, that he could in an interval of vapours raise laughter in any company, in his chamber was "mute and mopish," and was at last so overcome by that intellectual disorder, which he appeared to have got rid of by writing his volume, that it is believed he closed his life in a fit of melancholy.

Could one have imagined that the brilliant wit, the luxuriant raillery, and the fine and deep sense of PASCAL, could have combined with the most opposite qualities — the hypochondriasm and bigotry of an ascetic? ROCHEFOUCAULD, in private life, was a conspicuous example of all those moral qualities of which he seemed to deny the existence, and exhibited in this respect a striking contrast to the Cardinal de Retz, who has presumed to censure him for his want of faith in the reality of virtue; but DE RETZ himself

was the unbeliever in disinterested virtue. This great genius was one of those pretended patriots destitute of a single one of the virtues for which he was the clamorous advocate of faction.

When Valincour attributed the excessive tenderness in the tragedies of RACINE to the poet's own impassioned character, the son amply showed that his father was by no means this slave of love. RACINE never wrote a single love poem, nor even had a mistress; and his wife had never read his tragedies, for poetry was not her delight. Racine's motive for making love the constant source of action in his tragedies, was, from the principle which has influenced so many poets, who usually conform to the prevalent taste of the times. In the court of a young monarch, it was necessary that heroes should be lovers; Corneille had nobly run in one career, and Racine could not have existed as a great poet, had he not rivalled him in an opposite one. The tender RACINE was no lover; but he was a subtle and epigrammatic observer, before whom his convivial friends never cared to open their minds; and the caustic BOILEAU truly said of him, "RACINE is far more malicious than I am."

ALFIERI speaks of his mistress, as if he lived with her in the most unreserved familiarity; the reverse was the case. And the gratitude and affection with which he describes his mother, and which she deserved, entered so little into his habitual feelings, that after their early separation, he never saw her but once, though he often passed through the country where she resided.

JOHNSON has composed a beautiful Rambler, describing the pleasures which result from the influence of good-humour; and somewhat remarkably says, "Without good-humour, learning and bravery can be only formidable, and confer that superiority which swells the heart of the lion in the desert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without resistance." He who could so finely discover the happy influence of this pleasing quality, was himself a stranger to it, and "the roar and the ravage" were familiar to our lion. Men of genius frequently substitute their beautiful imagination for spontaneous and natural sentiment. It is not therefore surprising, if we are often erroneous in the conception we form of the personal character of a distant author. KLOPSTOCK, the votary of the muse of Zion, so astonished and warmed the sage BODMER, that he invited the inspired bard to his house; but his visitor shocked the grave professor, when, instead of a poet rapt in silent meditation, a volatile youth leaped out of the chaise, who was an enthusiast for retirement only when writing verses. An artist, whose pictures exhibit a series of scenes of domestic tenderness, awakening all the charities of private life, I have heard participated in them in no other way than on his canvas. EVELYN, who has written in favour of active life, "loved and lived in retirement*;" while Sir GEORGE MACKENZIE, who had been continually in the bustle of business, framed a eulogium on solitude. We see in MACHIAVEL'S code of tyranny, of depravity, and of criminal violence, a horrid picture of human nature; but this retired philosopher was a friend to the freedom of his country, he participated in none of the crimes he had recorded, but drew up these systematised crimes "as an observer, not as a criminal." DRUMMOND, whose sonnets still retain the beauty and the sweetness and the delicacy of the most amiable imagination, was a man of a harsh irritable temper, and has been thus characterised:—

"Testie Drummond could not speak for fretting."

Thus authors and artists may yield no certain indication of their personal characters in their works. Inconstant men will write on constancy, and licentious minds may elevate themselves into poetry and piety. We should be unjust to some of the greatest geniuses, if the extraordinary sentiments which they put into the mouths of their dramatic personages are maliciously to be applied to themselves. EURIPIDES was accused of atheism when he introduced a denier of the gods on the stage. MILTON has been censured by CLARKE for the impiety of Satan; and an enemy of SHAKESPEARE might have reproached him for his perfect delineation of the accomplished villain Iago, as it was said that Dr. MOORE was hurt in the opinions of some by his odious Zeluco. CREBILLON complains of this:—"They charge me with all the iniquities of Atreus, and they consider me in some places as a wretch with whom it is unfit to associate; as if all which the mind invents must be derived from the heart." This poet offers a striking instance of the little alliance existing between the literary and personal dispositions of an author. CREBILLON, who exulted, on his entrance into the French Academy, that he had never tinged his pen with the gall of satire, delighted to strike on the most harrowing string

* Since this was written, the correspondence of EVELYN has appeared, by which we find that he apologised to Cowley for having published this very treatise, which seemed to condemn that life of study and privacy to which they were both equally attached; and confesses that the whole must be considered as a mere sportive effusion, requesting that Cowley would not suppose its principles formed his private opinions. Thus LEIBNITZ, we are told, laughed at the fanciful system revealed in his *Theodicée*, and acknowledged that he never wrote it in earnest; that a philosopher is not always obliged to write seriously, and that to invent an hypothesis is only a proof of the force of imagination.

of the tragic lyre. In his Atreus, the father drinks the blood of his son; in his Rhadamistus, the son expires under the hand of the father; in his Electra, the son assassinates the mother. A poet is a painter of the soul, but a great artist is not therefore a bad man.

MONTAIGNE appears to have been sensible of this fact in the literary character. Of authors, he says, he likes to read their little anecdotes and private passions:—"Car j'ai une singulière curiosité de connaître l'âme et les naïfs jugemens de mes auteurs. Il faut bien juger leur suffisance, mais non pas leurs mœurs, ni eux, par cette montre de leurs écrits qu'ils étalent au théâtre du monde." Which may be thus translated: "For I have a singular curiosity to know the soul and simple opinions of my authors. We must judge of their ability, but not of their manners, nor of themselves, by that show of their writings which they display on the theatre of the world." This is very just; are we yet sure, however, that the simplicity of this old favourite of Europe might not have been as much a theatrical gesture as the sentimentality of Sterne? The great authors of the Port-Royal Logic have raised severe objections to prove that MONTAIGNE was not quite so open in respect to those simple details which he imagined might diminish his personal importance with his readers. He pretends that he reveals all his infirmities and weaknesses, while he is perpetually passing himself off for something more than he is. He carefully informs us that he has "a page," the usual attendant of an independent gentleman, and lives in an old family château; when the fact was, that his whole revenue did not exceed six thousand livres, a state beneath mediocrity. He is also equally careful not to drop any mention of his having a *clerk with a bag*; for he was a counsellor of Bordeaux, but affected the gentleman and the soldier. He trumpets himself forth for having been *mayor* of Bordeaux, as this offered an opportunity of telling us that he succeeded *Marshal* Biron, and resigned it to *Marshal* Matignon. Could he have discovered that any *marshal* had been a *lawyer*, he would not have sunk that part of his life. Montaigne himself has said, "that in forming a judgment of a man's life, particular regard should be paid to his behaviour at the end of it;" and he more than once tells us that the chief study of his life is to die calm and silent; and that he will plunge himself headlong and stupidly into death, as into an obscure abyss, which swallows one up in an instant; that to die was the affair of a moment's suffering, and required no precepts. He talked of reposing on the "pillow of doubt." But how did this great philosopher die? He called for the more powerful opiates of the infallible church! The mass was performed in his chamber, and, in rising to embrace it, his hands dropped and failed him; thus, as Professor Dugald Stewart observes on this philosopher,—"He expired in performing what his old preceptor, Buchanan, would not have scrupled to describe as an act of idolatry."

We must not then consider that he who paints vice with energy is therefore vicious, lest we injure an honourable man; nor must we imagine that he who celebrates virtue is therefore virtuous, for we may then repose on a heart which knowing the right pursues the wrong.

These paradoxical appearances in the history of genius present a curious moral phenomenon. Much must be attributed to the plastic nature of the versatile faculty itself. Unquestionably many men of genius have often resisted the indulgence of one talent to exercise another with equal power; and some who have solely composed sermons, could have touched on the foibles of society with the spirit of Horace or Juvenal. BLACKSTONE and Sir WILLIAM JONES directed that genius to the austere studies of law and philology, which might have excelled in the poetical and historical character. So versatile is this faculty of genius, that its possessors are sometimes uncertain of the manner in which they shall treat their subject, whether gravely or ludicrously. When BRÉBŒUF, the French translator of the Pharsalia of Lucan, had completed the first book as it now appears, he at the same time composed a burlesque version, and sent both to the great arbiter of taste in that day, to decide which the poet should continue. The decision proved to be difficult. Are there not writers who, with all the vehemence of genius, by adopting one principle, can make all things shrink into the pigmy forms of ridicule, or by adopting another principle startle us by the gigantic monsters of their own exaggerated imagination? On this principle of the versatility of the faculty, a production of genius is a piece of art which wrought up to its full effect, with a felicity of manner acquired by taste and habit, is merely the result of certain arbitrary combinations of the mind.

Are we then to reduce the works of a man of genius to a mere sport of his talents—a game in which he is only the best player? Can he whose secret power raises so many emotions in our breasts, be without any in his own? A mere actor performing a part? Is he unfeeling when he is pathetic, indifferent when he is indignant? Is he an alien to all the wisdom and virtue he inspires? No! were men of genius themselves to assert this, and it is said some incline so to do, there is a more certain conviction than their misconceptions, in our own consciousness, which for ever assures us, that deep feelings and elevated

thoughts can alone spring from those who feel deeply and think nobly.

In proving that the character of the man may be very opposite to that of his writings, we must recollect that the habits of the life may be contrary to the habits of the mind*. The influence of their studies over men of genius is limited. Out of the ideal world, man is reduced to be the active creature of sensation. An author has, in truth, two distinct characters: the literary, formed by the habits of his study; the personal, by the habits of his situation. GRAY, cold, effeminate, and timid in his personal, was lofty and awful in his literary character. We see men of polished manners and bland affections, who, in grasping a pen, are thrusting a poniard; while others in domestic life with the simplicity of children and the feebleness of nervous affections, can shake the senate or the bar with the vehemence of their eloquence and the intrepidity of their spirit. The writings of the famous BAPTISTA PORTA are marked by the boldness of his genius, which formed a singular contrast with the pusillanimity of his conduct when menaced or attacked. The heart may be feeble though the mind is strong. To think boldly may be the habit of the mind, to act weakly may be the habit of the constitution.

However the personal character may contrast with that of their genius, still are the works themselves genuine, and exist as realities for us—and were so doubtless to the composers themselves in the act of composition. In the calm of study, a beautiful imagination may convert him, whose morals are corrupt, into an admirable moralist, awakening feelings which yet may be cold in the business of life: as we have shown that the phlegmatic can excite himself into wit, and the cheerful man delight in "Night Thoughts." SALLUST, the corrupt Sallust, might retain the most sublime conceptions of the virtues which were to save the Republic; and STERNE, whose heart was not so susceptible in ordinary occurrences, while he was gradually creating incident after incident and touching successive emotions, in the stories of Le Fevre and Maria, might have thrilled—like some of his readers. Many have mourned over the wisdom or the virtue they contemplated, mortified at their own infirmity. Thus, though there may be no identity between the book and the man, still for us, an author is ever an abstract being, and, as one of the Fathers said, "A dead man may sin dead, leaving books that make others sin." An author's wisdom or his folly does not die with him. The volume, not the author, is our companion, and is for us a real personage, performing before us whatever it inspires; "He being dead, yet speaketh." Such is the vitality of a book!

* Nothing is more delightful to me in my researches on the literary character, than when I find in persons of unquestionable and high genius the results of my own discoveries. This circumstance has frequently happened to confirm my principles. Long after this was published, Madame de Staël made this important confession in her recent work, "Dix Années d'Exil," p. 154. "Je ne pouvais me dissimuler que je n'étais pas une personne courageuse; j'ai de la hardiesse dans *l'imagination*, mais de la timidité dans le *caractère*."

CHAPTER XXI.

The man of letters.—Occupies an intermediate station between authors and readers.—His solitude described.—Often the father of genius.—Atticus, a man of letters of antiquity.—The perfect character of a modern man of letters exhibited in Peiresc.—Their utility to authors and artists.

AMONG the active members of the literary republic, there is a class whom formerly we distinguished by the title of MEN OF LETTERS, a title which, with us, has nearly gone out of currency, though I do not think that the general term of "literary men" would be sufficiently appropriate.

The man of letters, whose habits and whose whole life so closely resemble those of an author, can only be distinguished by this simple circumstance, that the man of letters is not an author.

Yet he whose sole occupation through life is literature, he who is always acquiring and never producing, appears as ridiculous as the architect who never raised an edifice, or the statuary who refrains from sculpture. His pursuits are reproached with terminating in an epicurean selfishness, and amidst his incessant avocations he himself is considered as a particular sort of idler.

This race of literary characters, as we now find them, could not have appeared till the press had poured forth its affluence. In the degree that the nations of Europe became literary, was that philosophical curiosity kindled, which induced some to devote their fortunes and their days, and to experience some of the purest of human enjoyments, in preserving and familiarising themselves with "the monuments of vanished minds," as books are called by D'Avenant with so much sublimity. Their expansive library presents an indestructible history of the genius of every people, through all their eras—and whatever men have thought and whatever men have done, were at length discovered in books.

Men of letters occupy an intermediate station between authors and readers. They are gifted with more curiosity of knowledge and more multiplied tastes, and by those precious collections which they are forming during their lives, are more completely furnished with the means than are

possessed by the multitude who read, and the few who write.

The studies of an author are usually restricted to particular subjects. His tastes are tinctured by their colouring, his mind is always shaping itself by their form. An author's works form his solitary pride, and his secret power; while half his life wears away in the slow maturity of composition, and still the ambition of authorship torments its victim alike in disappointment or in possession.

But soothing is the solitude of the MAN OF LETTERS! View the busied inhabitant of the library surrounded by the objects of his love! He possesses them—and they possess him! Those volumes—images of our mind and passions!—as he traces them from Herodotus to Gibbon, from Homer to Shakespeare—those portfolios, which gather up the inventions of genius, and that selected cabinet of medals, which holds so many unwritten histories;—some favourite sculptures and pictures, and some antiquities of all nations, here and there about his house—these are his furniture!

In his unceasing occupations the only repose he requires, consists, not in quitting but in changing them. Every day produces its discovery; every day in the life of a man of letters may furnish a multitude of emotions and of ideas. For him there is a silence amidst the world; and in the scene, ever opening before him, all that has passed is acted over again, and all that is to come seems revealed as in a vision. Often his library is contiguous to his chamber*, and this domain "parva sed apta," this contracted space, has often marked the boundary of the existence of the opulent owner, who lives where he will die; contracting his days into hours: and a whole life thus passed is found too short to close its designs. Such are the men who have not been unhappily described by the Hollanders as *lief-hebbers*, lovers or fanciers, and their collection as *lief-hebbery*, things of their love. The Dutch call everything for which they are impassioned *lief-hebbery*; but their feeling being much stronger than their delicacy, they apply the term to everything from poesy and picture to tulips and tobacco. The term wants the melody of the languages of genius; but something parallel is required to correct that indiscriminate notion which most persons associate with that of *collectors*.

It was fancifully said of one of these lovers, in the style of the age, that, "His book was his bride, and his study his bride-chamber." Many have voluntarily relinquished a public station and their rank in society, neglecting even their fortune and their health, for the life of self-oblivion of the man of letters. Count DE CAYLUS expended a princely income in the study and the encouragement of Art. He passed his mornings among the studios of artists, watching their progress, increasing his collections, and closing his day in the retirement of his own cabinet. His rank and his opulence were no obstructions to his settled habits. CICERO himself, in his happier moments, addressing ATTICUS, exclaimed—"I had much rather be sitting on your little bench under Aristotle's picture, than in the curule chairs of our great ones." This wish was probably sincere, and reminds us of another great politician who in his secession from public affairs retreated to a literary life, where he appears suddenly to have discovered a new-found world. Fox's favourite line, which he often repeated, was,

> "How various his employments whom the world
> Calls idle!"

De Sacy, one of the Port-Royalists, was fond of repeating this lively remark of a man of wit:—"that all the mischief in the world comes from not being able to keep ourselves quiet in our room."

But tranquillity is essential to the existence of the man of letters—an unbroken and devotional tranquillity. For though, unlike the author, his occupations are interrupted without inconvenience, and resumed without effort; yet if the painful realities of life break into this visionary world of literature and art, there is an atmosphere of taste about him which will be dissolved, and harmonious ideas which will be chased away, as it happens when something is violently flung among the trees where the birds are singing; all instantly disperse!

Even to quit their collections for a short time is a real suffering to these lovers; everything which surrounds them becomes endeared by habit, and by some higher associations. Men of letters have died with grief from having been forcibly

* The contiguity of the CHAMBER to the LIBRARY is not the solitary fancy of an individual, but marks the class. Early in life, when in France and Holland, I met with several of these *amateurs*, who had bounded their lives by the circle of their collections, and were rarely seen out of them. The late Duke of ROXBURGH once expressed his delight to a literary friend of mine, that he had only to step from his sleeping apartment into his fine library; so that he could command, at all moments, the gratification of pursuing his researches while he indulged his reveries. The Chevalier VERHULST, of Bruxelles, of whom we have a curious portrait prefixed to the catalogue of his pictures and curiosities, was one of those men of letters who experienced this strong affection for his collections, and to such a degree, that he never went out of his house for twenty years; where, however, he kept up a courteous intercourse with the lovers of art and literature. He was an enthusiastic votary of Rubens, of whom he has written a copious life in Dutch, the only work he appears to have composed.

deprived of the use of their libraries. De Thou, with all a brother's sympathy, in his great history, has recorded the sad fates of several who had witnessed their collections dispersed in the civil wars of France, or had otherwise been deprived of their precious volumes. Sir Robert Cotton fell ill, and betrayed, in the ashy paleness of his countenance, the misery which killed him on the sequestration of his collections. "They have broken my heart who have locked up my library from me," was his lament.

If this passion for acquisition and enjoyment be so strong and exquisite, what wonder that these "lovers" should regard all things as valueless in comparison with the objects of their love? There seem to be spells in their collections, and in their fascination they have often submitted to the ruin of their personal, but not of their internal enjoyments. They have scorned to balance in the scales the treasures of literature and art, though imperial magnificence once was ambitious to outweigh them.

Van Praun, a friend of Albert Durer's, of whom we possess a catalogue of pictures and prints, was one of these enthusiasts of taste. The Emperor of Germany, probably desirous of finding a royal road to a rare collection, sent an agent to procure the present one entire; and that some delicacy might be observed with such a man, the purchase was to be proposed in the form of a mutual exchange; the emperor had gold, pearls, and diamonds. Our *lief-hebber* having silently listened to the imperial agent, seemed astonished that such things should be considered as equivalents for a collection of works of art, which had required a long life of experience and many previous studies and practised tastes to have formed, and compared with which gold, pearls, and diamonds, afforded but a mean, an unequal, and a barbarous barter.

If the man of letters be less dependent on others for the very perception of his own existence, than men of the world are; his solitude however is not that of a desert: for all there tends to keep alive those concentrated feelings which cannot be indulged with security, or even without ridicule in general society. Like the Lucullus of Plutarch, he would not only live among the votaries of literature, but would live for them; he throws open his library, his gallery, and his cabinet, to all the Grecians. Such men are the fathers of genius; they seem to possess an aptitude in discovering those minds which are clouded over by the obscurity of their situations; and it is they who so frequently project those benevolent institutions, where they have poured out the philanthropy of their hearts in that world which they appear to have forsaken. If Europe be literary, to whom does she owe this more than to these men of letters? Is it not to their noble passion of amassing through life those magnificent collections, which often bear the names of their founders from the gratitude of a following age? Venice, Florence, and Copenhagen, Oxford and London, attest the existence of their labours. Our Bodleys and our Harleys, our Cottons and our Sloanes, our Cracherodes, our Townleys, and our Banks, were of this race! In the perpetuity of their own studies they felt as if they were extending human longevity, by throwing an unbroken light of knowledge into the next age. The private acquisitions of a solitary man of letters during half a century have become public endowments. A generous enthusiasm inspired these intrepid labours, and their voluntary privations of what the world calls its pleasures and its honours, would form an interesting history not yet written; their due, yet undischarged.

But "men of the world," as they are emphatically distinguished, imagine that a man so lifeless in "the world" must be one of the dead in it, and, with mistaken wit, would inscribe over the sepulchre of his library, "Here lies the body of our friend." If the man of letters have voluntarily quitted their "world," at least he has passed into another, where he enjoys a sense of existence through a long succession of ages, and where Time, who destroys all things for others, for him only preserves and discovers. This world is best described by one who has lingered among its inspirations. "We are wafted into other times and strange lands, connecting us by a sad but exalting relationship with the great events and great minds which have passed away. Our studies at once cherish and control the imagination, by leading it over an unbounded range of the noblest scenes in the overawing company of departed wisdom and genius*."

Living more with books than with men, which is often becoming better acquainted with man himself, though not always with men, the man of letters is more tolerant of opinions than opinionists are among themselves. Nor are his views of human affairs contracted to the day, like those who in the heat and hurry of a too active life, prefer expedients to principles; men who deem themselves politicians because they are not moralists; to whom the centuries behind have conveyed no results, and who cannot see how the present time is always full of the future. "Everything," says the lively Burnet, "must be brought to the nature of tinder or gunpowder, ready for a spark to set it on fire," before they discover it. The man of letters indeed is accused of a cold indifference to the interests which divide society;

* Quarterly Review, No. xxxiii. p. 145.

he is rarely observed as the head or the "rump of a party;" he views at a distance their temporary passions—those mighty beginnings, of which he knows the miserable terminations.

Antiquity presents the character of a perfect man of letters in ATTICUS, who retreated from a political to a literary life. Had his letters accompanied those of Cicero, they would have illustrated the ideal character of his class. But the sage ATTICUS rejected a popular celebrity for a passion not less powerful, yielding up his whole soul to study. CICERO, with all his devotion to literature, was at the same time agitated by another kind of glory, and the most perfect author in Rome imagined that he was enlarging his honours by the intrigues of the consulship. He has distinctly marked the character of the man of letters in the person of his friend ATTICUS, for which he has expressed his respect, although he could not content himself with its imitation. "I know," says this man of genius and ambition, "I know the greatness and ingenuousness of your soul, nor have I found any difference between us, but in a different choice of life; a certain sort of ambition has led me earnestly to seek after honours, while other motives, by no means blamable, induced you to adopt an honourable leisure; *honestum otium.**" These motives appear in the interesting memoirs of this man of letters; a contempt of political intrigues combined with a desire to escape from the splendid bustle of Rome to the learned leisure of Athens. He wished to dismiss a pompous train of slaves for the delight of assembling under his roof a literary society of readers and transcribers. And having collected under that roof the portraits or busts of the illustrious men of his country, inspired by their spirit and influenced by their virtues or their genius, he inscribed under them, in concise verses, the characters of their mind. Valuing wealth only for its use, a dignified economy enabled him to be profuse, and a moderate expenditure allowed him to be generous.

The result of this literary life was the strong affections of the Athenians. At the first opportunity the absence of the man of letters offered, they raised a statue to, him, conferring on our POMPONIUS the fond surname of ATTICUS. To have received a name from the voice of the city they inhabited has happened to more than one man of letters. PINELLI, born a Neapolitan, but residing at Venice, among other peculiar honours received from the senate, was there distinguished by the affectionate title of "the Venetian."

Yet such a character as ATTICUS could not escape censure from "men of the world." They want the heart and the imagination to conceive something better than themselves. The happy indifference, perhaps the contempt, of our ATTICUS for rival factions, they have stigmatised as a cold neutrality, a timid pusillanimous hypocrisy. Yet ATTICUS could not have been a mutual friend, had not both parties alike held the man of letters as a sacred being amidst their disguised ambition; and the urbanity of ATTICUS, while it balanced the fierceness of two heroes, Pompey and Cæsar, could even temper the rivalry of genius in the orators Hortensius and Cicero. A great man of our own country widely differed from the accusers of Atticus. Sir MATTHEW HALE lived in distracted times, and took the character of our man of letters for his model, adopting two principles in the conduct of the Roman. He engaged himself with no party business, and afforded a constant relief to the unfortunate, of whatever party. He was thus preserved amidst the contests of the times.

If the personal interests of the man of letters be not deeply involved in society, his individual prosperity, however, is never contrary to public happiness. Other professions necessarily exist by the conflict and the calamities of the community: the politician becomes great by hatching an intrigue; the lawyer, in counting his briefs; the physician, his sick-list. The soldier is clamorous for war; the merchant riots on high prices. But the man of letters only calls for peace and books, to unite himself with his brothers scattered over Europe; and his usefulness can only be felt at those intervals, when, after a long interchange of destruction, men, recovering their senses, discover that "knowledge is power." BURKE, whose ample mind took in every conception of the literary character, has finely touched on the distinction between this order of contemplative men, and the other active classes of society. In addressing Mr. MALONE, whose real character was that of a man of letters who first showed us the neglected state of our literary history, BURKE observed—for I shall give his own words, always too beautiful to alter—"If you are not called to exert your great talents, and employ your great acquisitions in the transitory service of your country, which is done in active life, you will continue to do it that permanent service which it receives from the labours of those who know how to make the silence of closets more beneficial to the world than all the noise and bustle of courts, senates, and camps."

A moving picture of the literary life of a man of letters, who was no author, would have been lost to us, had not PEIRESC found in GASSENDI a twin spirit. So intimate was that biographer with the very thoughts, so closely united in the same pursuits, and so perpetual an observer of the remarkable man whom he has immortalised, that whe

* Ad Atticum, Lib. i. Ep. 17.

employed on this elaborate resemblance of his friend, he was only painting himself with all the identifying strokes of self-love *.

It was in the vast library of PINELLI, the founder of the most magnificent one in Europe, that PEIRESC, then a youth, felt the remote hope of emulating the man of letters before his eyes. His life was not without preparation, nor without fortunate coincidences; but there was a grandeur of design in the execution which originated in the genius of the man himself.

The curious genius of PEIRESC was marked by its precocity, as usually are strong passions in strong minds; this intense curiosity was the germ of all those studies which seemed mature in his youth. He early resolved on a personal intercourse with the great literary characters of Europe; and his friend has thrown over these literary travels that charm of detail by which we accompany PEIRESC into the libraries of the learned; there with the historian opening new sources of history, or with the critic correcting manuscripts, and settling points of erudition; or by the opened cabinet of the antiquary, deciphering obscure inscriptions, and explaining medals. In the galleries of the curious in art, among their marbles, their pictures, and their prints, PEIRESC has often revealed to the artist some secret in his own art. In the museum of the naturalist, or the garden of the botanist, there was no rarity of nature on which he had not something to communicate. His mind toiled with that impatience of knowledge, that becomes a pain only when the mind is not on the advance. In England PEIRESC was the associate of Camden and Selden, and had more than one interview with that friend to literary men, our calumniated James the First. One may judge by these who were the men whom PEIRESC sought, and by whom he himself was ever after sought. Such, indeed, were immortal friendships! Immortal they may be justly called, from the objects in which they concerned themselves, and from the permanent results of the combined studies of such friends.

Another peculiar greatness in this literary character was PEIRESC's enlarged devotion to literature out of its purest love for itself alone. He made his own universal curiosity the source of knowledge to other men. Considering the studious as forming but one great family wherever they were, for PEIRESC the national repositories of knowledge in Europe formed but one collection for the world. This man of letters had possessed himself of their contents, that he might have manuscripts collated, unedited pieces explored, extracts supplied, and even draughtsmen employed in remote parts of the world, to furnish views and plans, and to copy antiquities for the student, who in some distant retirement often discovered that the literary treasures of the world were unfailingly opened to him by the secret devotion of this man of letters.

Carrying on the same grandeur in his views, his universal mind busied itself in every part of the habitable globe. He kept up a noble traffic with all travellers, supplying them with philosophical instruments and recent inventions, by which he facilitated their discoveries, and secured their reception even in barbarous realms. In return he claimed, at his own cost, for he was "born rather to give than to receive," says Gassendi, fresh importations of Oriental literature, curious antiquities, or botanic rarities; and it was the curiosity of PEIRESC which first embellished his own garden, and thence the gardens of Europe, with a rich variety of exotic flowers and fruits. Whenever presented with a medal, a vase, or a manuscript, he never slept over the gift till he had discovered what the donor delighted in; and a book, a picture, or a plant, when money could not be offered, fed their mutual passion, and sustained the general cause of science. The correspondence of PEIRESC branched out to the farthest bounds of Ethiopia, connected both Americas, and had touched the newly-discovered extremities of the universe, when this intrepid mind closed in a premature death.

I have drawn this imperfect view of PEIRESC's character, that men of letters may be reminded of the capacities they possess. In the character of PEIRESC, however, there still remains another peculiar feature. His fortune was not great; and when he sometimes endured the reproach of those whose sordidness was startled at his prodigality of mind, and the great objects which were the result, PEIRESC replied, that "a small matter suffices for the natural wants of a literary man, whose true wealth consists in the monuments of arts, the treasures of his library, and the brotherly affections of the ingenious." PEIRESC was a French judge, but he supported his rank more by his own character than by luxury or parade. He would not wear silk, and no tapestry hangings ornamented his apartments; but the walls were covered with the portraits of his literary friends; and in the unadorned simplicity of his study, his books, his papers, and his letters, were scattered about him on the tables, the seats, and the floor. There, stealing from the world, he would sometimes admit to his spare supper his friend Gassendi, "content," says that amiable philosopher, "to have me for his guest."

PEIRESC, like PINELLI, never published any

* "I suppose," writes EVELYN, that most agreeable enthusiast of literature, to a travelling friend, "that you carry the life of that incomparable virtuoso always about you in your motions, not only because it is portable, but for that it is written by the pen of the great Gassendus."

work. These men of letters derived their pleasure, and perhaps their pride, from those vast strata of knowledge which their curiosity had heaped together in their mighty collections. They either were not endowed with that faculty of genius which strikes out aggregate views, or were destitute of the talent of composition which embellishes minute ones. This deficiency in the minds of such men may be attributed to a thirst of learning, which the very means to allay can only inflame. From all sides they are gathering information; and that knowledge seems never perfect to which every day brings new acquisitions. With these men, to compose is to hesitate; and to revise is to be mortified by fresh doubts and unsupplied omissions. PEIRESC was employed all his life on a history of Provence; but, observes Gassendi, "He could not mature the birth of his literary offspring, or lick it into any shape of elegant form; he was, therefore, content to take the midwife's part, by helping the happier labours of others."

Such are the cultivators of knowledge, who are rarely authors, but who are often, however, contributing to the works of others; and without whose secret labours the public would not have possessed many valued ones. The delightful instruction which these men are constantly offering to authors and to artists, flows from their silent but uninterrupted cultivation of literature and the arts.

When Robertson, after his successful History of Scotland, was long irresolute in his designs, and still unpractised in that curious research which habitually occupies these men of letters, his admirers had nearly lost his popular productions, had not a fortunate introduction to Dr. BIRCH enabled him to open the clasped books, and to drink of the sealed fountains. ROBERTSON has confessed his inadequate knowledge, and his overflowing gratitude, in letters which I have elsewhere printed. A suggestion by a man of letters has opened the career of many an aspirant. A hint from WALSH conveyed a new conception of English poetry to one of its masters. The celebrated treatise of GROTIUS on "Peace and War" was projected by PEIRESC. It was said of MAGLIABECHI, who knew all books, and never wrote one, that by his diffusive communications he was in some respect concerned in all the great works of his times. Sir ROBERT COTTON greatly assisted CAMDEN and SPEED; and that hermit of literature, BAKER of Cambridge, was ever supplying with his invaluable researches Burnet, Kennet, Hearne, and Middleton. The concealed aid which men of letters afford authors, may be compared to those subterraneous streams, which, flowing into spacious lakes, are, though unobserved, enlarging the waters which attract the public eye.

Count DE CAYLUS, celebrated for his collections, and for his generous patronage of artists, has given the last touches to this picture of the man of letters, with all the delicacy and warmth of a self-painter.

"His glory is confined to the mere power which he has of being one day useful to letters and to the arts; for his whole life is employed in collecting materials of which learned men and artists make no use till after the death of him who amassed them. It affords him a very sensible pleasure to labour in hopes of being useful to those who pursue the same course of studies, while there are so great a number who die without discharging the debt which they incur to society."

Such a man of letters appears to have been the late Lord WOODHOUSELEE. Mr. Mackenzie, returning from his lordship's literary retirement, meeting Mr. Alison, finely said, that "he hoped he was going to Woodhouselee; for no man could go there without being happier, or return from it without being better."

Shall we then hesitate to assert, that this class of literary men forms a useful, as well as a select order in society? We see that their leisure is not idleness, that their studies are not unfruitful for the public, and that their opinions, purified from passions and prejudices, are always the soundest in the nation. They are counsellors whom statesmen may consult; fathers of genius to whom authors and artists may look for aid, and friends of all nations; for we ourselves have witnessed, during a war of thirty years, that the MEN OF LETTERS in England were still united with their brothers in France. The abode of Sir JOSEPH BANKS was ever open to every literary and scientific foreigner; while a wish expressed or a communication written by this MAN OF LETTERS, was even respected by a political power which, acknowledging no other rights, paid a voluntary tribute to the claims of science and the privileges of literature.

CHAPTER XXII.

Literary old age still learning.—Influence of late studies in life.—Occupations in advanced age of the literary character.—Of literary men who have died at their studies.

THE old age of the literary character retains its enjoyments, and usually its powers—a happiness which accompanies no other. The old age of coquetry witnesses its own extinct beauty; that of the "used" idler is left without a sensation; that of the grasping Crœsus exists only to envy his heir; and that of the Machiavel who has no longer a voice in the cabinet, is but an unhappy spirit lingering to find its grave: but for the aged man

of letters memory returns to her stores, and imagination is still on the wing amidst fresh discoveries and new designs. The others fall like dry leaves, but he drops like ripe fruit, and is valued when no longer on the tree.

The constitutional melancholy of JOHNSON often tinged his views of human life. When he asserted that "no man adds much to his stock of knowledge, or improves much after forty," his theory was overturned by his own experience; for his most interesting works were the productions of a very late period of life, formed out of the fresh knowledge with which he had then furnished himself.

The intellectual faculties, the latest to decline, are often vigorous in the decrepitude of age. The curious mind is still striking out into new pursuits, and the mind of genius is still creating. ANCORA IMPARO!—"Even yet I am learning!" was the concise inscription on an ingenious device of an old man placed in a child's go-cart, with an hour-glass upon it, which, it is said, Michael Angelo applied to his own vast genius in his ninetieth year. Painters have improved even to extreme old age: West's last works were his best, and Titian was greatest on the verge of his century. Poussin was delighted with the discovery of this circumstance in the lives of painters. "As I grow older, I feel the desire of surpassing myself." And it was in the last years of his life, that with the finest poetical invention, he painted the allegorical pictures of the Seasons. A man of letters in his sixtieth year once told me, "It is but of late years that I have learnt the right use of books and the art of reading."

Time, the great destroyer of other men's happiness, only enlarges the patrimony of literature to its possessor. A learned and highly intellectual friend once said to me, "If I have acquired more knowledge these last four years than I had hitherto, I shall add materially to my stores in the next four years; and so at every subsequent period of my life, should I acquire only in the same proportion, the general mass of my knowledge will greatly accumulate. If we are not deprived by nature or misfortune of the means to pursue this perpetual augmentation of knowledge, I do not see but we may be still fully occupied and deeply interested even to the last day of our earthly term." Such is the delightful thought of Owen Feltham; "If I die to-morrow, my life will be somewhat the sweeter to-day for knowledge." The perfectibility of the human mind, the animating theory of the eloquent De Staël, consists in the mass of our ideas, to which every age will now add, by means unknown to preceding generations. Imagination was born at once perfect, and her arts find a term to their progress; but there is no boundary to knowledge nor the discovery of thought.

How beautiful in the old age of the literary character was the plan which a friend of mine pursued! His mind, like a mirror whose quicksilver had not decayed, reflected all objects to the last. Full of learned studies and versatile curiosity, he annually projected a summer-tour on the Continent to some remarkable spot. The local associations were an unfailing source of agreeable impressions to a mind so well prepared, and he presented his friends with a "Voyage Littéraire," as a new-year's gift. In such pursuits, where life is "rather wearing out than rusting out," as Bishop Cumberland expressed it, scarcely shall we feel those continued menaces of death which shake the old age of men of no intellectual pursuits, who are dying so many years.

Active enjoyments in the decline of life, then, constitute the happiness of literary men. The study of the arts and literature spreads a sunshine over the winter of their days. In the solitude and the night of human life, they discover that unregarded kindness of nature, which has given flowers that only open in the evening, and only bloom through the night-season. NECKER perceived the influence of late studies in life; for he tells us, that "the era of threescore and ten is an agreeable age for writing; your mind has not lost its vigour, and envy leaves you in peace."

The opening of one of LA MOTHE LE VAYER'S Treatises is striking: "I should but ill return the favours God has granted me in the eightieth year of my age, should I allow myself to give way to that shameless want of occupation which all my life I have condemned;" and the old man proceeds with his "Observations on the Composition and Reading of Books." "If man be a bubble of air, it is then time that I should hasten my task; for my eightieth year admonishes me to get my baggage together ere I leave the world," wrote VARRO, in opening his curious treatise *de Re Rustica*, which the sage lived to finish, and which, after nearly two thousand years, the world possesses. "My works are many, and I am old; yet I still can fatigue and tire myself with writing more," says PETRARCH in his Epistle to Posterity. The literary character has been fully occupied in the eightieth and the ninetieth year of life. ISAAC WALTON still glowed while writing some of the most interesting biographies in his eighty-fifth year, and in the ninetieth enriched the poetical world with the first publication of a romantic tale by Chalkhill, "the friend of Spenser." BODMER, beyond eighty, was occupied on Homer, and WIELAND on Cicero's Letters*.

But the delight of opening a new pursuit, or a new course of reading, imparts the vivacity and

* See Curiosities of Literature, on "The progress of old age in new studies."

novelty of youth even to old age. The revolutions of modern chemistry kindled the curiosity of Dr. Reid to his latest days, and he studied by various means, to prevent the decay of his faculties, and to remedy the deficiencies of one failing sense by the increased activity of another. A late popular author, when advanced in life, discovered, in a class of reading to which he had never been accustomed, a profuse supply of fresh furniture for his mind. This felicity was the delightfulness of the old age of GOETHE—literature, art, and science, formed his daily inquiries; and this venerable genius, prompt to receive each novel impression, was a companion for the youthful, and a communicator of knowledge even for the most curious.

Even the steps of time are retraced, and we resume the possessions we seemed to have lost; for in advanced life a return to our early studies refreshes and renovates the spirits: we open the poets who made us enthusiasts, and the philosophers who taught us to think, with a new source of feeling acquired by our own experience. ADAM SMITH confessed his satisfaction at this pleasure to professor Dugald Stewart, while "he was re-perusing, with the enthusiasm of a student, the tragic poets of ancient Greece, and Sophocles and Euripides lay open on his table."

Dans ses veines toujours un jeune sang bouillone,
Et Sophocle à cent ans peint encore Antigone.

The calm philosophic Hume found that death only could interrupt the keen pleasure he was again receiving from Lucian, inspiring at the moment a humorous self-dialogue with Charon. "Happily," said this philosopher, "on retiring from the world, I found my taste for reading return, even with greater avidity." We find GIBBON, after the close of his History, returning with an appetite as keen to "a full repast on Homer and Aristophanes, and involving himself in the philosophic maze of the writings of Plato." Lord WOODHOUSELEE found the recomposition of his "Lectures on History" so fascinating in the last period of his life, that Mr. Alison informs us, "it rewarded him with that *peculiar delight*, which has been often observed in the later years of literary men; the delight of returning again to the studies of their youth, and of feeling under the snows of age the cheerful memories of their spring."

Not without a sense of exultation has the literary character felt this peculiar happiness, in the unbroken chain of his habits and his feelings. HOBBES exulted that he had outlived his enemies, and was still the same Hobbes; and to demonstrate the reality of this existence, published, in the eighty-seventh year of his age, his version of the Odyssey, and the following year his Iliad. Of the happy results of literary habits in advanced life, the Count DE TRESSAN, the elegant abridger of the old French romances, in his "literary advice to his children" has drawn a most pleasing picture. With a taste for study, which he found rather inconvenient in the moveable existence of a man of the world, and a military wanderer, he had, however, contrived to reserve an hour or two every day for literary pursuits. The men of science, with whom he had chiefly associated, appear to have turned his passion to observation and knowledge, rather than towards imagination and feeling; the combination formed a wreath for his grey hairs. When Count de Tressan retired from a brilliant to an affectionate circle, amidst his family, he pursued his literary tastes, with the vivacity of a young author inspired by the illusion of fame. At the age of seventy-five, with the imagination of a poet, he abridged, he translated, he recomposed his old Chivalric Romances, and his reanimated fancy struck fire in the veins of the old man. Among the first designs of his retirement was a singular philosophical legacy for his children. It was a view of the history and progress of the human mind—of its principles, its errors, and its advantages, as these were reflected in himself; in the dawnings of his taste, and the secret inclinations of his mind, which the men of genius of the age with whom he associated had developed. Expatiating on their memory, he calls on his children to witness the happiness of study, so evident in those pleasures which were soothing and adorning his old age. "Without knowledge, without literature," exclaims the venerable enthusiast, "in whatever rank we are born, we can only resemble the vulgar." To the centenary FONTENELLE the Count DE TRESSAN was chiefly indebted for the happy life he derived from the cultivation of literature; and when this man of a hundred years died, TRESSAN, himself on the borders of the grave, would offer the last fruits of his mind in an *éloge* to his ancient master. It was the voice of the dying to the dead, a last moment of the love and sensibility of genius, which feeble life could not extinguish.

The genius of CICERO, inspired by the love of literature, has thrown something delightful over this latest season of life, in his *de Senectute*. To have written on old age, in old age, is to have obtained a triumph over Time *.

When the literary character shall discover himself to be like a stranger in a new world, when all that he loved has not life, and all that lives has no love for old age: when his ear has ceased to listen, and nature has locked up the man within himself, he may still expire amidst his busied thoughts.

* Spurinna, or the Comforts of Old Age, by the late Sir Thomas Bernard, was written a year or two before he died.

Such aged votaries, like the old bees, have been found dying in their honey-combs. Let them preserve but the flame alive on the altar, and at the last moments they may be found in the act of sacrifice! The venerable BEDE, the instructor of his generation, and the historian for so many successive ones, expired in the act of dictating. Such was the fate of PETRARCH, who, not long before his death, had written to a friend, "I read, I write, I think; such is my life, and my pleasures as they were in my youth." Petrarch was found lying on a folio in his library, from which volume he had been busied in making extracts for the biography of his countrymen. His domestics having often observed him studying in that reclining posture for days together, it was long before they discovered that the poet was no more. The fate of LEIBNITZ was similar: he was found dead with the Argenis of Barclay in his hand; he had been studying the style of that political romance as a model for his intended history of the House of Brunswick. The literary death of BARTHELEMY affords a remarkable proof of the force of uninterrupted habits of study. He had been slightly looking over the newspaper, when suddenly he called for a Horace, opened the volume, and found the passage, on which he paused for a moment; and then, too feeble to speak, made a sign to bring him Dacier's; but his hands were already cold, the Horace fell—and the classical and dying man of letters sunk into a fainting fit, from which he never recovered. Such too was the fate, perhaps now told for the first time, of the great Lord CLARENDON. It was in the midst of composition that his pen suddenly dropped from his hand on the paper, he took it up again, and again it dropped: deprived of the sense of touch—his hand without motion—the earl perceived himself struck by palsy—and the life of the noble exile closed amidst the warmth of a literary work unfinished!

CHAPTER XXIII.

Universality of Genius.—Limited notion of genius entertained by the ancients.—Opposite faculties act with diminished force.—Men of genius excel only in a single art.

THE ancients addicted themselves to one species of composition; the tragic poet appears not to have entered into the province of comedy, nor, as far as we know, were their historians writers of verse. Their artists worked on the same principle; and from Pliny's account of the ancient sculptors, we may infer that with them the true glory of genius consisted in carrying to perfection a single species of their art. They did not exercise themselves indifferently on all subjects, but cultivated the favourite ones which they had chosen from the impulse of their own imagination. The hand which could copy nature in a human form, with the characteristics of the age and the sex, and the occupations of life, refrained from attempting the colossal and ideal majesty of a divinity; and when one of these sculptors, whose skill was pre-eminent in casting animals, had exquisitely wrought the glowing coursers for a triumphal car, he requested the aid of Praxiteles to place the driver in the chariot, that his work might not be disgraced by a human form of inferior beauty to his animals. Alluding to the devotion of an ancient sculptor to his labours, Madame de Staël has finely said, "The history of his life was the history of his statue."

Such was the limited conception which the ancients formed of genius. They confined it to particular objects or departments in art. But there is a tendency among men of genius to ascribe a universality of power to a master-intellect. Dryden imagined that Virgil could have written satire equally with Juvenal, and some have hardily defined genius as "a power to accomplish all that we undertake." But literary history will detect this fallacy, and the failures of so many eminent men are instructions from Nature which must not be lost on us.

No man of genius put forth more expansive promises of universal power than LEIBNITZ. Science, imagination, history, criticism, fertilised the richest of human soils; yet LEIBNITZ with immense powers and perpetual knowledge, dissipated them in the multiplicity of his pursuits. "The first of philosophers," the late Professor Playfair observed, "has left nothing in the immense tract of his intellect which can be distinguished as a monument of his genius." As a universalist, VOLTAIRE remains unparalleled in ancient or in modern times. This voluminous idol of our neighbours stands without a rival in literature; but an exception, even if this were one, cannot overturn a fundamental principle, for we draw our conclusions not from the fortune of one man of genius, but from the fate of many. The real claims of this great writer to invention and originality are as moderate as his size and his variety are astonishing. The wonder of his ninety volumes is, that he singly consists of a number of men of the second order, making up one great man; for unquestionably some could rival Voltaire in any single province, but no one but himself has possessed them all. Voltaire discovered a new art, that of creating a supplement to the genius which had preceded him; and without Corneille, Racine, and Ariosto, it would be difficult to conjecture what sort of a poet Voltaire could have been. He was master, too, of a secret in composition, which consisted in a new style and manner.

His style promotes, but never interrupts thinking, while it renders all subjects familiar to our comprehension: his manner consists in placing objects well known in new combinations; he ploughed up the fallow lands, and renovated the worn-out exhausted soils. Swift defined a good style, as "proper words in proper places." Voltaire's impulse was of a higher flight, "proper thoughts on proper subjects." Swift's idea was that of a grammarian. Voltaire's feeling was that of a philosopher. We are only considering this universal writer in his literary character, which has fewer claims to the character of an inventor, than several who never attained to his celebrity.

Are the original powers of genius then limited to a single art, and even to departments in that art? May not men of genius plume themselves with the vain glory of universality? Let us dare to call this a vain glory; for he who stands the first in his class, does not really add to the distinctive character of his genius, by a versatility which, however apparently successful, is always subordinate to the great character on which his fame rests. It is only that character which bears the raciness of the soil; it is only that impulse whose solitary force stamps the authentic work of genius. To execute equally well on a variety of subjects, may raise a suspicion of the nature of the executive power. Should it be mimetic, the ingenious writer may remain absolutely destitute of every claim to genius. Du Clos has been refused the honours of genius by the French critics, because he wrote equally well on a variety of subjects.

I know that this principle is contested by some of great name, who have themselves evinced a wonderful variety of powers. This penurious principle flatters not that egotism which great writers share in common with the heroes who have aimed at universal empire. Besides, this universality may answer many temporary purposes. These writers may however observe, that their contemporaries are continually disputing on the merits of their versatile productions, and the most contrary opinions are even formed by their admirers; but their great individual character standing by itself, and resembling no other, is a positive excellence. It is time only, who is influenced by no name, and will never, like contemporaries, mistake the true work of genius.

And if it be true that the primary qualities of the mind are so different in men of genius as to render them more apt for one class than for another, it would seem, that whenever a pre-eminent faculty had shaped the mind, a faculty of the most contrary nature must act with a diminished force, and the other often with an exclusive one. An impassioned and pathetic genius has never become equally eminent as a comic genius. Richardson and Fielding could not have written each other's works. Could Butler, who excelled in wit and satire, like Milton have excelled in sentiment and imagination? Some eminent men have shown remarkable failures in their attempts to cultivate opposite departments in their own pursuits. The tragedies and the comedies of Dryden equally prove that he was not blest with a dramatic genius. Cibber, a spirited comic writer, was noted for the most degrading failures in tragedy; while Rowe, successful in the softer tones of the tragic muse, proved as luckless a candidate for the smiles of the comic, as the pathetic Otway. La Fontaine, unrivalled humorist as a fabulist, found his opera hissed, and his romance utterly tedious. The true genius of Sterne was of a descriptive and pathetic cast, and his humour and ribaldry were a perpetual violation of his natural bent. Alfieri's great tragic powers could not strike out into comedy or wit. Scarron declared he intended to write a tragedy. The experiment was not made, but with his strong cast of mind and habitual associations, we probably have lost a new sort of "Roman comique." Cicero failed in poetry, Addison in oratory, Voltaire in comedy, and Johnson in tragedy. The Anacreontic poet remains only Anacreontic in his epic. With the fine arts the same occurrence has happened. It has been observed in painting, that the school eminent for design was deficient in colouring; while those who with Titian's warmth could make the blood circulate in the flesh, could never rival the expression and anatomy of even the middling artists of the Roman school.

Even among those rare and gifted minds which have startled us by the versatility of their powers, whence do they derive the high character of their genius? Their durable claims are substantiated by what is inherent in themselves—what is individual—and not by that flexibility which may include so much which others can equal. We rate them by their positive originality, not by their variety of powers. When we think of Young, it is only of his "Night Thoughts," not of his tragedies, nor his poems, nor even of his satires, which others have rivalled or excelled. Of Akenside the solitary work of genius is his great poem; his numerous odes are not of a higher order than those of other ode-writers. Had Pope only composed odes and tragedies, the great philosophical poet, master of human life and of perfect verse, had not left an undying name. Teniers, unrivalled in the walk of his genius, degraded history by the meanness of his conceptions. Such instances abound, and demonstrate an important truth in the history of genius, that we cannot,

however we may incline, enlarge the natural extent of our genius, any more than we can "add a cubit to our stature." We may force it into variations, but in multiplying mediocrity, or in doing what others can do, we add nothing to genius.

So true is it that men of genius appear only to excel in a single art, or even in a single department of art, that it is usual with men of taste to resort to a particular artist for a particular object. Would you ornament your house by interior decorations, to whom would you apply if you sought the perfection of art, but to *different artists*, of very distinct characters in their invention and their execution? For your Arabesques you would call in the artist whose delicacy of touch and playfulness of ideas are not to be expected from the grandeur of the historical painter, or the sweetness of the *Paysagiste*. Is it not evident that men of genius *excel* only in one department of their art, and that whatever they do with the utmost original perfection, cannot be equally done by another man of genius? He whose undeviating genius guards itself in its own true sphere, has the greatest chance of encountering no rival. He is a Dante, a Milton, a Michael Angelo, a Raphael: his hand will not labour on what the Italians call *pasticcios;* and he remains not unimitated, but inimitable.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Literature an avenue to glory.—An intellectual nobility not chimerical, but created by public opinion.—Literary honours of various nations.—Local associations with the memory of the man of genius.

LITERATURE is an avenue to glory, ever open for those ingenious men who are deprived of honours or of wealth. Like that illustrious Roman who owed nothing to his ancestors, *videtur ex se natus*, these seem self-born; and in the baptism of fame, they have given themselves their name. Bruyère has finely said of men of genius, "These men have neither ancestors nor posterity; they alone compose their whole race."

But AKENSIDE, we have seen, blushed when his lameness reminded him of the fall of one of his father's cleavers; PRIOR, the son of a vintner, could not endure to be reminded, though by his favourite Horace, that "the cask retains its flavour;" like VOITURE, another descendant of a *marchand de vin*, whose heart sickened over that which exhilarates all other hearts, whenever his opinion of its *quality* was maliciously consulted. All these instances too evidently prove that genius is subject to the most vulgar infirmities.

But some have thought more courageously. The amiable ROLLIN was the son of a cutler, but the historian of nations never felt his dignity compromised by his birth. Even late in life, he ingeniously alluded to his first occupation, for we find an epigram of his in sending a knife for a new-year's gift, "informing his friend, that, should this present appear to come rather from Vulcan than from Minerva, it should not surprise, for," adds the epigrammatist, "it was from the cavern of the Cyclops I began to direct my footsteps towards Parnassus." The great political negotiator, Cardinal D'OSSAT, was elevated by his genius from an orphan state of indigence, and was alike destitute of ancestry, of titles, even of parents. On the day of his creation, when others of noble extraction assumed new titles from the seignorial names of their ancient houses, he was at a loss to fix on one. Having asked the pope whether he should choose that of his bishopric, his holiness requested him to preserve his plain family name, which he had rendered famous by his own genius. The sons of a sword-maker, a potter, and a tax-gatherer, were the greatest of the orators, the most majestic of the poets, and the most graceful of the satirists of antiquity; Demosthenes, Virgil, and Horace. The eloquent Massillon, the brilliant Fléchier, Rousseau and Diderot; Johnson, Goldsmith, and Franklin, arose amidst the most humble avocations.

Vespasian raised a statue to the historian JOSEPHUS, though a Jew; and the Athenians one to Æsop, though a slave. Even among great military republics the road to public honour was open, not alone to heroes and patricians, but to that solitary genius which derives from itself all which it gives to the public, and nothing from its birth or the public situation it occupies.

It is the prerogative of genius to elevate obscure men to the higher class of society. If the influence of wealth in the present day have created a new aristocracy of its own, where they already begin to be jealous of their ranks, we may assert that genius creates a sort of intellectual nobility, which is now conferred by public feeling; as heretofore the surnames of "the African," and of "Coriolanus," won by valour, associated with the names of the conqueror of Africa and the vanquisher of Corioli. Were men of genius, as such, to have armorial bearings, they might consist, not of imaginary things, of griffins and chimeras, but of deeds performed and of public works in existence. When DONDI raised the great astronomical clock at the University of Padua which was long the admiration of Europe, it gave a name and nobility to its maker and all his descendants. There still lives a Marquis Dondi dal' Horologio. Sir HUGH MIDDLETON, in memory of his vast enterprise, changed his former arms to bear three piles, to perpetuate the

interesting circumstance, that by these instruments he had strengthened the works he had invented, when his genius poured forth the waters through our metropolis, thereby distinguishing it from all others in the world. Should not EVELYN have inserted an oak-tree in his bearings? for his "Sylva" occasioned the plantation of "many millions of timber-trees," and the present navy of Great Britain has been constructed with the oaks which the genius of Evelyn planted. There was an eminent Italian musician, who had a piece of music inscribed on his tomb; and I have heard of a Dutch mathematician, who had a calculation for his epitaph.

We who were reproached for a coldness in our national character, have caught the inspiration and enthusiasm for the works and the celebrity of genius; the symptoms indeed were long dubious. REYNOLDS wished to have one of his own pictures, "Contemplation in the figure of an Angel," carried at his funeral; a custom not unusual with foreign painters; but it was not deemed prudent to comply with this last wish of the great artist, from the fears entertained as to the manner in which a London populace might have received such a novelty. This shows that the profound feeling of art is still confined within a circle among us, of which hereafter the circumference perpetually enlarging, may embrace even the whole people. If the public have borrowed the names of some lords to dignify a "Sandwich" and a "Spencer," we may be allowed to raise into titles of literary nobility those distinctions which the public voice has attached to some authors; *Æschylus* Potter, *Athenian* Stuart, and *Anacreon* Moore. BUTLER, in his own day, was more generally known by the single and singular name of *Hudibras*, than by his own.

This intellectual nobility is not chimerical. Such titles must be found indeed, in the years which are to come; yet the prelude of their fame distinguishes these men from the crowd. Whenever the rightful possessor appears, will not the eyes of all spectators be fixed on him? I allude to scenes which I have witnessed. Will not even literary honours superadd a nobility to nobility; and make a name instantly recognised which might otherwise be hidden under its rank, and remain unknown by its title? Our illustrious list of literary noblemen is far more glorious than the satirical "Catalogue of Noble Authors," drawn up by a polished and heartless cynic, who has pointed his brilliant shafts at all who were chivalrous in spirit, or related to the family of genius. One may presume on the existence of this intellectual nobility, from the extraordinary circumstance that the great have actually felt a jealousy of the literary rank. But no rivalry can exist in the solitary honour conferred on an author. It is not an honour derived from birth nor creation, but from PUBLIC OPINION, and inseparable from his name, as an essential quality; for the diamond will sparkle and the rose will be fragrant, otherwise it is no diamond or rose. The great may well condescend to be humble to genius, since genius pays its homage in becoming proud of that humility. Cardinal Richelieu was mortified at the celebrity of the unbending CORNEILLE; so were several noblemen at POPE'S indifference to their rank; and MAGLIABECHI, the book prodigy of his age, whom every literary stranger visited at Florence, assured Lord Raley that the Duke of Tuscany had become jealous of the attention he was receiving from foreigners, as they usually went to visit MAGLIABECHI before the grand duke.

A confession by MONTESQUIEU states, with open candour, a fact in his life which confirms this jealousy of the great with the literary character. "On my entering into life I was spoken of as a man of talents, and people of condition gave me a favourable reception; but when the success of my Persian Letters proved perhaps that I was not unworthy of my reputation, and the public began to esteem me, *my reception with the great was discouraging, and I experienced innumerable mortifications.*" Montesquieu subjoins a reflection sufficiently humiliating for the mere nobleman: "The great, inwardly wounded with the glory of a celebrated name, seek to humble it. In general he only can patiently endure the fame of others, who deserves fame himself." This sort of jealousy unquestionably prevailed in the late Lord ORFORD, a wit, a man of the world, and a man of rank; but while he considered literature as a mere amusement, he was mortified at not obtaining literary celebrity; he felt his authorial always beneath his personal character. It fell to my lot to develop his real feelings respecting himself and the literary men of his age *.

Who was the dignified character, Lord Chesterfield or Samuel Johnson, when the great author, proud of his protracted and vast labour, rejected his lordship's tardy and trivial patronage? "I value myself," says Swift, "upon making the

* Calamities of Authors. I printed, in 1812, extracts from Walpole's correspondence with Cole. Some have considered that there was a severity of delineation in my character of Horace Walpole. I was the *first*, in my impartial view of his literary character, to proclaim to the world what it has now fully sanctioned, that "His most pleasing, if not his great talent, lay in *letter-writing;* here he was without a rival. His correspondence abounded with literature, criticism, and wit of the most original and brilliant composition." This was published several years before the recent collection of his letters.

ministry desire to be acquainted with PARNELL, and not Parnell with the ministry." PIRON would not suffer the literary character to be lowered in his presence. Entering the apartment of a nobleman, who was conducting another peer to the stair's-head, the latter stopped to make way for Piron: "Pass on, my lord," said the noble master; "pass, he is only a poet." PIRON replied, "Since our qualities are declared, I shall take my rank," and placed himself before the lord. Nor is this pride, the true source of elevated character, refused to the great artist as well as the great author. MICHAEL ANGELO, invited by Julius II. to the court of Rome, found that intrigue had indisposed his holiness towards him, and more than once the great artist was suffered to linger in attendance in the ante-chamber. One day the indignant man of genius exclaimed, "Tell his holiness, if he want me, he must look for me elsewhere." He flew back to his beloved Florence, to proceed with that celebrated cartoon which afterwards became a favourite study with all artists. Thrice the pope wrote for his return, and at length menaced the little state of Tuscany with war, if Michael Angelo prolonged his absence. He returned. The sublime artist knelt at the feet of the father of the church, turning aside his troubled countenance in silence. An intermeddling bishop offered himself as a mediator, apologising for our artist by observing, that "Of this proud humour are these painters made!" Julius turned to this pitiable mediator, and, as Vasari tells, used a switch on this occasion, observing, "You speak injuriously of him, while I am silent. It is you who are ignorant." Raising Michael Angelo, Julius II. embraced the man of genius.

"I can make lords of you every day, but I cannot create a Titian," said the Emperor Charles V. to his courtiers, who had become jealous of the hours and the half-hours which the monarch stole from them that he might converse with the man of genius at his work. There is an elevated intercourse between power and genius; and if they are deficient in reciprocal esteem, neither are great. The intellectual nobility seems to have been asserted by De Harlay, a great French statesman; for when the Academy was once not received with royal honours, he complained to the French monarch, observing, that when "a man of letters was presented to Francis I. for the first time, the king always advanced three steps from the throne to receive him." It is something more than an ingenious thought, when Fontenelle, in his *éloge* on LEIBNITZ, alluding to the death of Queen Anne, adds of her successor, that "The Elector of Hanover united under his dominion an electorate, the three kingdoms of Great Britain, and LEIBNITZ and NEWTON."

If ever the voice of individuals can recompense a life of literary labour, it is in speaking a foreign accent. This sounds like the distant plaudit of posterity. The distance of space between the literary character and the inquirer, in some respects represents the distance of time which separates the author from the next age. FONTENELLE was never more gratified than when a Swede, arriving at the gates of Paris, inquired of the custom-house officers where Fontenelle resided, and expressed his indignation that not one of them had ever heard of his name. HOBBES expresses his proud delight that his portrait was sought after by foreigners, and that the Great Duke of Tuscany made the philosopher the object of his first inquiries. CAMDEN was not insensible to the visits of German noblemen, who were desirous of seeing the British Pliny; and POCOCK, while he received no aid from patronage at home for his Oriental studies, never relaxed in those unrequited labours, animated by the learned foreigners, who hastened to see and converse with this prodigy of Eastern learning.

Yes! to the very presence of the man of genius will the world spontaneously pay their tribute of respect, of admiration, or of love. Many a pilgrimage has he lived to receive, and many a crowd has followed his footsteps! There are days in the life of genius which repay its sufferings. DEMOSTHENES confessed he was pleased when even a fishwoman of Athens pointed him out. CORNEILLE had his particular seat in the theatre, and the audience would rise to salute him when he entered. At the presence of RAYNAL in the House of Commons, the speaker was requested to suspend the debate till that illustrious foreigner, who had written on the English parliament, was accommodated with a seat. SPINOSA, when he gained an humble livelihood by grinding optical glasses, at an obscure village in Holland, was visited by the first general in Europe, who, for the sake of this philosophical conference, suspended the march of the army.

In all ages and in all countries has this feeling been created. It is neither a temporary ebullition nor an individual honour. It comes out of the heart of man. It is the passion of great souls. In Spain, whatever was most beautiful in its kind was described by the name of the great Spanish bard: everything excellent was called a Lope. Italy would furnish a volume of the public honours decreed to literary men; nor is that spirit extinct, though the national character has fallen by the chance of fortune. METASTASIO and TIRABOSCHI received what had been accorded to PETRARCH and to POGGIO. Germany, patriotic to its literary characters, is the land of the enthusiasm of genius. On the borders of the Linnet, in the public walk

of Zurich, the monument of GESSNER, erected by the votes of his fellow-citizens, attests their sensibility; and a solemn funeral honoured the remains of KLOPSTOCK, led by the senate of Hamburgh, with fifty thousand votaries, so penetrated by one universal sentiment, that this multitude preserved a mournful silence, and the interference of the police ceased to be necessary through the city at the solemn burial of the man of genius. Has even Holland proved insensible? The statue of ERASMUS, in Rotterdam, still animates her young students, and offers a noble example to her neighbours of the influence even of the sight of the statue of a man of genius. Travellers never fail to mention ERASMUS when Basle occupies their recollections; so that, as Bayle observes, "He has rendered the place of his death as celebrated as that of his birth." In France, since Francis I. created genius, and Louis XIV. protected it, the impulse has been communicated to the French people. There the statues of their illustrious men spread inspiration on the spots which living they would have haunted:—in their theatres, the great dramatists; in their Institute, their illustrious authors; in their public edifices, congenial men of genius*. This is worthy of the country which privileged the family of LA FONTAINE to be for ever exempt from taxes, and decreed that "the productions of the mind were not seizable," when the creditors of CREBILLON would have attached the produce of his tragedies.

These distinctive honours accorded to genius, were in unison with their decree respecting the will of BAYLE. It was the subject of a lawsuit between the heir of the will and the inheritor by blood. The latter contested that this great literary character, being a fugitive for religion, and dying in a proscribed country, was divested by law of the power to dispose of his property, and that our author, when resident in Holland, in a civil sense was dead. In the parliament of Toulouse the judge decided that learned men are free in all countries; that he who had sought in a foreign land an asylum from his love of letters, was no fugitive; that it was unworthy of France to treat as a stranger a son in whom she gloried, and he protested against the notion of a civil death to such a man as BAYLE, whose name was living throughout Europe. This judicial decision in France was in unison with that of the senate of Rotterdam, who declared of the emigrant BAYLE, that "Such a man should not be considered as a foreigner."

Even the most common objects are consecrated when associated with the memory of the man of genius. We still seek for his tomb on the spot where it has vanished. The enthusiasts of genius still wander on the hills of Pausilippo, and muse on VIRGIL to retrace his landscape. There is a grove at Magdalen College which retains the name of ADDISON'S walk, where still the student will linger; and there is a cave at Macao, which is still visited by the Portuguese from a national feeling, for CAMOENS there passed many days in composing his Lusiad. When PETRARCH was passing by his native town, he was received with the honours of his fame; but when the heads of the town conducted Petrarch to the house where the poet was born, and informed him that the proprietor had often wished to make alterations, but that the towns-people had risen to insist that the house which was consecrated by the birth of Petrarch should be preserved unchanged; this was a triumph more affecting to Petrarch than his coronation at Rome*.

In the village of Certaldo is still shown the house of BOCCACCIO; and on a turret are seen the arms of the Medici, which they had sculptured there, with an inscription alluding to a small house and a name which filled the world; and in Ferrara, the small house which ARIOSTO built was purchased, to be preserved, by the municipality, and there they still show the poet's study; and under his bust a simple but affecting tribute to genius records, that "Ludovico Ariosto in this apartment wrote." Two hundred and eighty years after the death of the divine poet, it was purchased and restored by the *podesta*, with the money of the *commune*, that "the public veneration may be maintained." "Foreigners," says Anthony Wood of MILTON, "have, out of pure devotion, gone to Bread-street to see the house and chamber where he was born;" and at Paris the house which VOLTAIRE inhabited, and at Ferney his study, are both preserved inviolate. In the study of MONTESQUIEU at La Brede, near Bordeaux, the proprietor has preserved all the furniture, without altering anything, that the apartment where this great man meditated on his immortal work should

* We cannot bury the fame of our English worthies—that exists before us, independent of ourselves; but we bury the influence of their inspiring presence in those immortal memorials of genius easy to be read by all men—their statues and their busts, consigning them to spots seldom visited, and often too obscure to be viewed.

* On this passage I find a remarkable manuscript note by Lord Byron.

"It would have pained me more that 'the proprietor' should have 'often' wished to make alterations than it could give pleasure that the rest of Arezzo rose against his *right* (for *right* he had); the depreciation of the lowest of mankind is more painful than the applause of the highest is pleasing; the sting of a scorpion is more in torture than the possession of anything could be in rapture."

want for nothing to assist the reveries of the spectator; and on the side of the chimney is still seen a place which while writing he was accustomed to rub his feet against, as they rested on it. In a keep or dungeon of this feudal *chateau*, the local association suggested to the philosopher his chapter on "The Liberty of the Citizen." It is the second chapter of the twelfth book, of which the close is remarkable.

Let us regret that the little villa of POPE, and the poetic Leasowes of SHENSTONE, have fallen the victims of property as much as if destroyed by the barbarous hand which cut down the consecrated tree of Shakespeare. The very apartment of a man of genius, the chair he studied in, the table he wrote on, are contemplated with curiosity; the spot is full of local impressions. And all this happens from an unsatisfied desire to see and hear him whom we never can see nor hear; yet in a moment of illusion, if we listen to a traditional conversation, if we can revive one of his feelings, if we can catch but a dim image, we reproduce this man of genius before us, on whose features we so often dwell. Even the rage of the military spirit has taught itself to respect the abode of genius; and Cæsar and Sylla, who never spared the blood of their own Rome, alike felt their spirit rebuked, and alike saved the literary city of Athens. Antiquity has preserved a beautiful incident of this nature, in the noble reply of the artist PROTOGENES. When the city of Rhodes was taken by Demetrius, the man of genius was discovered in his garden, tranquilly finishing a picture. "How is it that you do not participate in the general alarm?" asked the conqueror. "Demetrius, you war against the Rhodians, but not against the fine arts," replied the man of genius. Demetrius had already shown this by his conduct, for he forbade firing that part of the city where the artist resided.

The house of the man of genius has been spared amidst contending empires, from the days of Pindar to those of Buffon; "the Historian of Nature's" chateau was preserved from this elevated feeling by Prince Schwartzenberg, as our MARLBOROUGH had performed the same glorious office in guarding the hallowed asylum of FENELON. In the grandeur of Milton's verse we perceive the feeling he associated with this literary honour—

> "The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
> The house of Pindarus when temple and tower
> Went to the ground———."

And the meanest things, the very household stuff, associated with the memory of the man of genius, become the objects of our affections. At a festival in honour of THOMSON the poet, the chair in which he composed part of his Seasons was produced, and appears to have communicated some of the raptures to which he was liable who had sat in that chair. RABELAIS, amongst his drollest inventions, could not have imagined that his old cloak would have been preserved in the university of Montpelier for future doctors to wear on the day they took their degree; nor could SHAKESPEARE have supposed, with all his fancy, that the mulberry-tree which he planted would have been multiplied into relics. But in such instances the feeling is right, with a wrong direction; and while the populace are exhausting their emotions on an old tree, an old chair, and an old cloak, they are paying that involuntary tribute to genius which forms its pride, and will generate the race.

CHAPTER XXV.

Influence of Authors on society, and of society on Authors.—National tastes a source of literary prejudices.—True Genius always the organ of its nation.—Master-writers preserve the distinct national character.—Genius the organ of the state of the age.—Causes of its suppression in a people.—Often invented, but neglected.—The natural gradations of genius.—Men of Genius produce their usefulness in privacy.—The public mind is now the creation of the public writer.—Politicians affect to deny this principle.—Authors stand between the governors and the governed.—A view of the solitary Author in his study.—They create an epoch in history. Influence of popular Authors.—The immortality of thought.—The Family of Genius illustrated by their genealogy.

LITERARY fame, which is the sole preserver of all other fame, participates little, and remotely, in the remuneration and the honours of professional characters. All other professions press more immediately on the wants and attentions of men, than the occupations of LITERARY CHARACTERS, who from their habits are secluded; producing their usefulness often at a late period of life, and not always valued by their own generation.

It is not the commercial character of a nation which inspires veneration in mankind, nor will its military power engage the affections of its neighbours. So late as in 1700, the Italian Gemelli told all Europe that he could find nothing among us but our *writings* to distinguish us from a people of barbarians. It was long considered that our genius partook of the density and variableness of our climate, and that we were incapacitated even by situation from the enjoyments of those beautiful arts which had not yet travelled to us,—as if Nature herself had designed to disjoin us from more polished nations and brighter skies.

At length we have triumphed! Our philosophers, our poets, and our historians, are printed at foreign presses. This is a perpetual victory, and establishes the ascendancy of our genius, as

much at least as the commerce and the prowess of England. This singular revolution in the history of the human mind, and by its reaction this singular revolution in human affairs, was effected by a glorious succession of AUTHORS, who have enabled our nation to arbitrate among the nations of Europe, and to possess ourselves of their involuntary esteem by discoveries in science, by principles in philosophy, by truths in history, and even by the graces of fiction; and there is not a man of genius among foreigners who stands unconnected with our intellectual sovereignty. Even had our country displayed more limited resources than its awful powers have opened, and had the sphere of its dominion been closed by its island boundaries, if the same *national literary character* had predominated, we should have stood on the same eminence among our Continental rivals. The small cities of Athens and of Florence will perpetually attest the influence of the literary character over other nations. The one received the tribute of the mistress of the universe, when the Romans sent their youth to be educated at the Grecian city, while the other, at the revival of letters, beheld every polished European crowding to its little court.

In closing this imperfect work by attempting to ascertain the real influence of authors on society, it will be necessary to notice some curious facts in the history of genius.

The distinct literary tastes of different nations, and the repugnance they mutually betray for the master-writers of each other, is an important circumstance to the philosophical observer. These national tastes originate in modes of feeling, in customs, in idioms, and all the numerous associations prevalent among every people. The reciprocal influence of manners on taste, and of taste on manners—of government and religion on the literature of a people, and of their literature on the national character, with other congenial objects of inquiry, still require a more ample investigation. Whoever attempts to reduce this diversity, and these strong contrasts of national tastes, to one common standard, by forcing such dissimilar objects into comparative parallels, or by trying them by conventional principles and arbitrary regulations, will often condemn what in truth his mind is inadequate to comprehend, and the experience of his associations to combine.

These attempts have been the fertile source in literature of what may be called national prejudices. The French nation insists that the northerns are defective in taste—the taste, they tell us, which is established at Paris, and which existed at Athens: the Gothic imagination of the north spurns at the timid copiers of the Latin classics, and interminable disputes prevail in their literature, as in their architecture and their painting. Philosophy discovers a fact of which taste seems little conscious; it is, that genius varies with the soil, and produces a nationality of taste. The feelings of mankind indeed have the same common source, but they must come to us through the medium and by the modifications of society. Love is a universal passion, but the poetry of love in different nations is peculiar to each; for every great poet belongs to his country. Petrarch, Lope de Vega, Racine, Shakespeare, and Sadi, would each express this universal passion by the most specific differences: and the style that would be condemned as unnatural by one people, might be habitual with another. The *concetti* of the Italian, the figurative style of the Persian, the swelling grandeur of the Spaniard, the classical correctness of the French, are all modifications of genius, relatively true to each particular writer. On national tastes critics are but wrestlers: the Spaniard will still prefer his Lope de Vega to the French Racine, or the English his Shakespeare, as the Italian his Tasso and his Petrarch. Hence all national writers are studied with enthusiasm by their own people, and their very peculiarities, offensive to others, with the natives constitute their excellences. Nor does this perpetual contest about the great writers of other nations solely arise from an association of patriotic glory, but really because these great native writers have most strongly excited the sympathies and conformed to the habitual tastes of their own people.

Hence then we deduce that true genius is the organ of its nation. The creative faculty is itself created; for it is the nation which first imparts an impulse to the character of genius. Such is the real source of those distinct tastes which we perceive in all great national authors. Every literary work, to ensure its success, must adapt itself to the sympathies and the understandings of the people it addresses. Hence those opposite characteristics which are usually ascribed to the master-writers themselves, originate with the country, and not with the writer. LOPE DE VEGA and CALDERON in their dramas, and CERVANTES, who has left his name as the epithet of a peculiar grave humour, were Spaniards before they were men of genius. CORNEILLE, RACINE, and RABELAIS, are entirely of an opposite character to the Spaniards, having adapted their genius to their own declamatory and vivacious countrymen. PETRARCH and TASSO display a fancifulness in depicting the passions, as BOCCACCIO narrates his facetious stories, quite distinct from the inventions and style of northern writers. SHAKESPEARE is placed at a wider interval from all of them than they are from each other, and is as perfectly insular in his genius, as his own countrymen were in

their customs, and their modes of thinking and feeling.

Thus the master-writers of every people preserve the distinct national character in their works; and hence that extraordinary enthusiasm with which every people read their own favourite authors; but in which others cannot participate, and for which, with all their national prejudices, they often recriminate on each other with false and even ludicrous criticism.

But genius is not only the organ of its nation; it is also that of the state of the times, and a great work usually originates in the age. Certain events must precede the man of genius, who often becomes only the vehicle of public feeling. MACHIAVEL has been reproached for propagating a political system subversive of all human honour and happiness; but was it Machiavel who formed his age, or the age which created Machiavel? Living among the petty principalities of Italy, where stratagem and assassination were the practices of those wretched courts, what did that calumniated genius more than lift the veil from a cabinet of banditti? MACHIAVEL alarmed the world by exposing a system subversive of all human virtue and happiness, and whether he meant it or not, certainly led the way to political freedom. On the same principle we may learn that BOCCACCIO would not have written so many indecent tales, had not the scandalous lives of the monks engaged public attention. This we may now regret; but the court of Rome felt the concealed satire, and that luxurious and numerous class in society never recovered from the chastisement.

MONTAIGNE has been censured for his universal scepticism, and for the unsettled notions he threw out on his motley page, which has been attributed to his incapacity of forming decisive opinions. "Que sçais-je?" was his motto. The same accusation may reach the gentle ERASMUS, who alike offended the old catholics and the new reformers. The real source of their vacillations we may discover in the age itself. It was one of controversy and of civil wars, when the minds of men were thrown into perpetual agitation, and opinions, like the victories of the parties, were every day changing sides.

Even in its advancement beyond the intelligence of its own age, genius is but progressive. In nature all is continuous; she makes no starts and leaps. Genius is said to soar, but we should rather say that genius climbs. Did the great VERULAM, or RAWLEIGH, or Dr. MORE, emancipate themselves from all the dreams of their age, from the occult agency of witchcraft, the astral influence, and the ghost and demon creed?

Before a particular man of genius can appear, certain events must arise to prepare the age for him. A great commercial nation, in the maturity of time, opened all the sources of wealth to the contemplation of ADAM SMITH. That extensive system of what is called political economy, could not have been produced at any other time; for before this period the materials of this work had but an imperfect existence, and the advances which this sort of science had made were only partial and preparatory. If the principle of Adam Smith's great work seems to confound the happiness of a nation with its wealth, we can scarcely reproach the man of genius, who we shall find is always reflecting back the feelings of his own nation, even in his most original speculations.

In works of pure imagination we trace the same march of the human intellect; and we discover in those inventions, which appear sealed by their originality, how much has been derived from the age and the people in which they were produced. Every work of genius is tinctured by the feelings, and often originates in the events, of the times. The *Inferno* of DANTE was caught from the popular superstitions of the age, and had been preceded by the gross visions which the monks had forged, usually for their own purposes. "La Città dolente," and "la perduta gente," were familiar to the imaginations of the people, by the monkish visions, and it seems even by ocular illusions of Hell, exhibited in mysteries, with its gulfs of flame, and its mountains of ice, and the shrieks of the condemned. To produce the "Inferno" only required the giant step of genius, in the sombre, the awful, and the fierce DANTE. When the age of chivalry flourished, all breathed of love and courtesy; the great man was the great lover, and the great author the romancer. It was from his own age that MILTON derived his greatest blemish,—the introduction of school-divinity into poetry. In a polemical age, the poet, as well as the sovereign, reflected the reigning tastes.

There are accidents to which genius is liable, and by which it is frequently suppressed in a people. The establishment of the Inquisition in Spain at one stroke annihilated all the genius of the country. Cervantes said that the Inquisition had spoilt many of his most delightful inventions; and unquestionably it silenced the wit and invention of a nation whose proverbs attest they possessed them even to luxuriance. All the Continental nations have boasted great native painters and architects, while these arts were long truly foreign to us. Theoretical critics, at a loss to account for this singularity, accused not only our climate, but even our diet, as the occult causes of our unfitness to cultivate them. Yet Montesquieu and Winkelmann might have observed, that the air of fens and marshes had not deprived the

gross feeders of Holland and Flanders of admirable artists. We have been outrageously calumniated. So far from any national incapacity, or obtuse feelings attaching to ourselves in respect to these arts, the noblest efforts had long been made, not only by individuals, but by the magnificence of Henry VIII., who invited to his court Raphael and Titian, but unfortunately only obtained Holbein. A later sovereign, Charles the First, not only possessed galleries of pictures, and was the greatest purchaser in Europe, for he raised their value, but he likewise possessed the taste and the science of the connoisseur. Something, indeed, had occurred to our national genius which had thrown it into a stupifying state, from which it is yet hardly aroused. Could those foreign philosophers have ascended to moral causes, instead of vapouring forth fanciful notions, they might have struck at the true cause of the deficiency in our national genius. The jealousy of puritanic fanaticism had persecuted these arts from the first rise of the Reformation in this country. It had not only banished them from our churches and altar-pieces, but the fury of the people, and the "wisdom" of parliament, had alike combined to mutilate and even efface what little remained of painting and sculpture among us. Even within our own times this deadly hostility to art was not extinct; for when a proposal was made gratuitously to decorate our places of worship by a series of religious pictures, and English artists, in pure devotion to Art, zealous to refute the Continental calumniators, asked only for walls to cover, George the Third highly approved of the plan. The design was put aside, as some had a notion that the cultivation of the fine arts in our naked churches was a return to Catholicism. Had this glorious plan been realized, the golden age of English art might have arisen. Every artist would have invented a subject most congenial to his powers. REYNOLDS would have emulated Raphael in the Virgin and Child in the manger, WEST had fixed on Christ raising the young man from the dead, BARRY had profoundly meditated on the Jews rejecting Jesus. Thus did an age of genius perish before its birth! It was on the occasion of this frustrated project that BARRY, in the rage of disappointment, immortalised himself by a gratuitous labour of seven years on the walls of the Society of Arts, for which, it is said, the French government under Buonaparte offered ten thousand pounds.

Thus also it has happened, that we have possessed among ourselves great architects, although opportunities for displaying their genius have been rare. This the fate and fortune of two Englishmen attest. Without the Fire of London, we might not have shown the world one of the greatest architects, in Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN; had not a St. Paul's been required by the nation, he would have found no opportunity of displaying the magnificence of his genius, which even then was mutilated, as the original model bears witness to the world. That great occasion served this noble architect to multiply his powers in other public edifices: and it is here worth remarking, that had not Charles II. been seized by apoplexy, the royal residence which was begun at Winchester on a plan of Sir Christopher Wren's, by its magnificence would have raised a Versailles for England.

The fate of INIGO JONES is as remarkable as that of WREN. Whitehall afforded a proof to foreigners, that among a people which, before that edifice appeared, was reproached for their total deficiency of feeling for the pure classical style of architecture, the true taste could nevertheless exist. This celebrated piece of architecture, however, is but a fragment of a grander composition, by which, had not the civil wars intervened, the fame of Britain would have balanced the glory of Greece, or Italy, or France, and would have shown that our country is more deficient in marble than in genius. Thus the fire of London produces a St. Paul's, and the civil wars suppress a Whitehall. Such circumstances in the history of art among nations have not always been developed by those theorists who have calumniated the artists of England.

In the history of genius it is remarkable, that its work is often invented, and lies neglected. A close observer of this age pointed out to me, that the military genius of that great French captain who so long appeared to have conquered Europe, was derived from his applying the new principles of war discovered by FOLARD and GUIBERT. The genius of FOLARD observed, that among the changes of military discipline in the practice of war among European nations since the introduction of gunpowder, one of the ancient methods of the Romans had been improperly neglected, and in his Commentaries on Polybius, Folard revived this forgotten mode of warfare. GUIBERT, in his great work, "Histoire de la Milice Française," or rather the History of the Art of War, adopted Folard's system of charging by columns, and breaking the centre of the enemy, which seems to be the famous plan of our Rodney and Nelson in their maritime battles. But this favourite plan became the ridicule of the military; and the boldness of his pen, with the high confidence of the author, only excited adversaries to mortify his pretensions, and to treat him as a dreamer. From this perpetual opposition to his plans, and the neglect he incurred, GUIBERT died of "vexation of spirit;" and the last words on the death-bed o

this man of genius were, "One day they will know me!" FOLARD and GUIBERT created a BUONAPARTE, who studied them on the field of battle; and he who would trace the military genius who so long held in suspense the fate of the world, may discover all that he performed in the neglected inventions of preceding genius.

Hence also we may deduce the natural gradations of genius. Many men of genius must arise before a particular man of genius can appear. Before HOMER there were other epic poets; a catalogue of their names and their works has come down to us. CORNEILLE could not have been the chief dramatist of France, had not the founders of the French drama preceded him, and POPE could not have preceded DRYDEN. It was in the nature of things that a GIOTTO and a CIMABUE should have preceded a RAPHAEL and a MICHAEL ANGELO.

Even the writings of such extravagant geniuses as BRUNO and CARDAN, gave indications of the progress of the human mind; and had RAMUS not shaken the authority of the *Organon* of Aristotle, we might not have had the *Novum Organon* of BACON. Men slide into their degree in the scale of genius, often by the exercise of a single quality which their predecessors did not possess, or by completing what at first was left imperfect. Truth is a single point in knowledge, as beauty is in art; ages revolve till a NEWTON and a LOCKE accomplish what an ARISTOTLE and a DESCARTES began. The old theory of animal spirits, observes Professor Dugald Stewart, was applied by DESCARTES to explain the mental phenomena, which led NEWTON into that train of thinking which served as the ground-work of HARTLEY'S theory of vibrations. The learning of one man makes others learned, and the influence of genius is in nothing more remarkable than in its effects on its brothers. SELDEN'S treatise on the Syrian and Arabian Deities enabled MILTON to comprise in one hundred and thirty beautiful lines, the two large and learned syntagma which Selden had composed on that abstract subject. LELAND, the father of British antiquities, impelled STOWE to work on his "Survey of London;" and Stowe's "London" inspired CAMDEN'S stupendous "Britannia." Herodotus produced Thucydides, and Thucydides Xenophon. With us HUME, ROBERTSON, and GIBBON, rose almost simultaneously by mutual inspiration. There exists a perpetual action and reaction in the history of the human mind. It has frequently been inquired why certain periods seem to have been more favourable to a particular class of genius than another; or in other words, why men of genius appear in clusters. We have theories respecting barren periods, which are only satisfactorily accounted for by moral causes. Genius generates enthusiasm and rivalry; but having reached the meridian of its class, we find that there can be no progress in the limited perfection of human nature. All excellence in art, if it cannot advance, must decline.

Important discoveries are often obtained by accident; but the single work of a man of genius, which has at length changed the character of a people, and even of an age, is slowly matured in meditation. Even the mechanical inventions of genius must first become perfect in its own solitary abode, ere the world can possess them. Men of genius then produce their usefulness in privacy; but it may not be of immediate application, and is often undervalued by their own generation.

The influence of authors is so great, while the author himself is so inconsiderable, that to some the cause may not appear commensurate to its effect. When EPICURUS published his doctrines, men immediately began to express themselves with freedom on the established religion, and the dark and fearful superstitions of paganism, falling into neglect, mouldered away. If, then, before the art of multiplying the productions of the human mind existed, the doctrines of a philosopher in manuscript or by lecture, could diffuse themselves throughout a literary nation, it will baffle the algebraist of metaphysics to calculate the unknown quantities of the propagation of human thought. There are problems in metaphysics, as well as in mathematics, which can never be resolved.

A small portion of mankind appears marked out by nature and by study for the purpose of cultivating their thoughts in peace, and of giving activity to their discoveries, by disclosing them to the people. "Could I," exclaims MONTESQUIEU, whose heart was beating with the feelings of a great author, "could I but afford new reasons to men to love their duties, their king, their country, their laws, that they might become more sensible of their happiness under every government they live, and in every station they occupy, I should deem myself the happiest of men!" Such was the pure aspiration of the great author who studied to preserve, by ameliorating, the humane fabric of society. The same largeness of mind characterises all the eloquent friends of the human race. In an age of religious intolerance it inspired the President DE THOU to inculcate, from sad experience and a juster view of human nature, the impolicy as well as the inhumanity of religious persecutions, in that dedication to Henry IV. which Lord Mansfield declared he could never read without rapture. "I was not born for myself alone, but for my country and my friends!" exclaimed the genius which hallowed the virtuous pages of his immortal history.

Even our liberal yet dispassionate LOCKE

restrained the freedom of his inquiries, and corrected the errors which the highest intellect may fall into, by marking out that impassable boundary which must probably for ever limit all human intelligence; for the maxim which LOCKE constantly inculcates is, that "Reason must be the last judge and guide in everything." A final answer to those who propagate their opinions, whatever they may be, with a sectarian spirit, to force the understandings of other men to their own modes of belief, and their own variable opinions. This alike includes those who yield up nothing to the genius of their age to correct the imperfections of society, and those who, opposing all human experience, would annihilate what is most admirable in its institutions.

The public mind is the creation of the Master-Writers; an axiom as demonstrable as any in Euclid, and a principle as sure in its operation as any in mechanics. BACON'S influence over philosophy, and GROTIUS'S over the political state of society, are still felt, and their principles practised far more than in their own age. These men of genius in their solitude, and with their views not always comprehended by their contemporaries, became themselves the founders of our science and our legislation. When LOCKE and MONTESQUIEU appeared, the old systems of government were reviewed; the principle of toleration was developed; and the revolutions of opinion were discovered.

A noble thought of VITRUVIUS, who of all the authors of antiquity seems to have been most deeply imbued with the feelings of the literary character, has often struck me by the grandeur and the truth of its conception. "The sentiments of excellent writers," he says, "although their persons be for ever absent, exist in future ages; and in councils and debates are of greater authority than those of the persons who are present."

But politicians affect to disbelieve that abstract principles possess any considerable influence on the conduct of the subject. They tell us, that "in times of tranquillity they are not wanted, and in times of confusion they are never heard;" this is the philosophy of men who do not choose that philosophy should disturb their fire-side! But it is in leisure, when they are not wanted, that the speculative part of mankind create them, and when they are wanted, they are already prepared for the active multitude, who come like a phalanx, pressing each other with a unity of feeling, and an integrity of force. PALEY would not close his eyes on what was passing before him; for he has observed, that during the convulsions at Geneva, the political theory of ROUSSEAU was prevalent in their contests; while in the political disputes of our country, the ideas of civil authority displayed in the works of LOCKE, recurred in every form. The character of a great author can never be considered as subordinate in society; nor do politicians secretly think so at the moment they are proclaiming it to the world, for on the contrary, they consider the worst actions of men as of far less consequence than the propagation of their opinions. Politicians have exposed their disguised terrors. Books, as well as their authors, have been tried and condemned. Cromwell was alarmed when he saw the Oceana of HARRINGTON, and dreaded the effects of that volume more than the plots of the royalists; while Charles II. trembled at an author only in his manuscript state, and in the height of terror, and to the honour of genius, it was decreed, that "Scribere est agere." —"The book of Telemachus," says Madame de Staël, "was a courageous action." To insist with such ardour on the duties of a sovereign, and to paint with such truth a voluptuous reign, disgraced Fenelon at the court of Louis XIV., but the virtuous author raised a statue for himself in all hearts. MASSILLON'S *Petit Carême* was another of these animated recalls of man to the sympathies of his nature, which proves the influence of an author; for during the contests of Louis XV. with the parliaments, large editions of this book were repeatedly printed, and circulated through the kingdom. In such moments it is that a people find and know the value of a great author, whose work is the mighty organ which conveys their voice to their governors.

But if the influence of benevolent authors over society is great, it must not be forgotten that the abuse of this influence is terrific. Authors preside at a tribunal in Europe, which is independent of all the powers of the earth,—the tribunal of Opinion! But since, as Sophocles has long declared, "Opinion is stronger than Truth," it is unquestionable that the falsest and the most depraved notions are, as long as these opinions maintain their force, accepted as immutable truths; and the mistakes of one man become the crimes of a whole people.

Authors stand between the governors and the governed, and form the single organ of both. Those who govern a nation cannot at the same time enlighten the people, for the executive power is not empirical; and the governed cannot think, for they have no continuity of leisure. The great systems of thought, and the great discoveries in moral and political philosophy, have come from the solitude of contemplative men, seldom occupied in public affairs or in private employments. The commercial world owes to two retired philosophers, LOCKE and SMITH, those principles which dignify trade into a liberal pursuit, and connect it with the happiness and the glory of a

people. A work in France, under the title of "L'Ami des Hommes," by the Marquis of MIRABEAU, first spread there a general passion for agricultural pursuits; and although the national ardour carried all to excess in the reveries of the "Economistes," yet marshes were drained and waste lands inclosed. The Emilius of ROUSSEAU, whatever may be its errors and extravagances, operated a complete revolution in modern Europe, by communicating a bolder spirit to education, and improving the physical force and character of man. An Italian marquis, whose birth and habits seemed little favourable to study, operated a moral revolution in the administration of the laws. BECCARIA dared to plead in favour of humanity against the prejudices of many centuries, in his small volume on "Crimes and Punishments," and at length abolished torture; while the French advocates drew their principles from that book, rather than from their national code, and our Blackstone quoted it with admiration! LOCKE and VOLTAIRE having written on "Toleration," have long made us tolerant. In all such cases, the authors were themselves entirely unconnected with their subjects, except as speculative writers.

Such are the authors who become universal in public opinion; and it then happens that the work itself meets with the singular fate, which that great genius SMEATON said happened to his stupendous Pharos: "The novelty having yearly worn off, and the greatest real praise of the edifice being that nothing has happened to it, nothing has occurred to keep the talk of it alive." The fundamental principles of such works, after having long entered into our earliest instruction, become unquestionable as self-evident propositions; yet no one, perhaps, at this day, can rightly conceive the great merits of Locke's Treatises on "Education," and on "Toleration;" or the philosophical spirit of Montesquieu, and works of this high order, which first diffused a tone of thinking over Europe. The principles have become so incorporated with our judgment, and so interwoven with our feelings, that we can hardly now imagine the fervour they excited at the time, or the magnanimity of their authors in the decision of their opinions. Every first great monument of genius raises a new standard to our knowledge, from which the human mind takes its impulse and measures its advancement. The march of human thought through ages might be indicated by every great work as it is progressively succeeded by others. It stands like the golden milliary column in the midst of Rome, from which all others reckoned their distances.

But a scene of less grandeur, yet more beautiful, is the view of the solitary author himself in his own study—so deeply occupied, that whatever passes before him never reaches his observation, while, working more than twelve hours every day, he still murmurs as the hour strikes; the volume still lies open, the page still importunes—"And whence all this business?" He has made a discovery for us! that never has there been anything important in the active world, but what is reflected in the literary—books contain everything, even the falsehoods and the crimes which have been only projected by men! This solitary man of genius is arranging the materials of instruction and curiosity from every country and every age; he is striking out, in the concussion of new light, a new order of ideas for his own times; he possesses secrets which men hide from their contemporaries, truths they dared not utter, facts they dared not discover. View him in the stillness of meditation, his eager spirit busied over a copious page, and his eye sparkling with gladness. He has concluded what his countrymen will hereafter cherish as the legacy of genius—you see him now changed; and the restlessness of his soul is thrown into his very gestures—could you listen to the vaticinator! But the next age only will quote his predictions. If he be the truly great author, he will be best comprehended by posterity, for the result of ten years of solitary meditation has often required a whole century to be understood and to be adopted. The ideas of Bishop BERKELEY, in his "Theory of Vision," were condemned as a philosophical romance, and now form an essential part of every treatise of optics; and "the History of Oracles," by FONTENELLE, says La Harpe, which in his youth was censured for its impiety, the centenarian lived to see regarded as a proof of his respect for religion.

"But what influence can this solitary man, this author of genius, have on his nation, when he has none in the very street in which he lives? and it may be suspected as little in his own house; whose inmates are hourly practising on the infantine simplicity which marks his character, and that frequent abstraction from what is passing under his own eyes?"

This solitary man of genius is stamping his own character on the minds of his own people. Take one instance, from others far more splendid, in the contrast presented by FRANKLIN and Sir WILLIAM JONES. The parsimonious habits, the money-getting precepts, the wary cunning, the little scruple about means, the fixed intent upon the end, of Dr. FRANKLIN, imprinted themselves on his Americans. Loftier feelings could not elevate a man of genius, who became the founder of a trading people, and who retained the early habits of a journeyman; while the elegant tastes of Sir WILLIAM JONES could inspire the servants of a com-

mercial corporation to open new and vast sources of knowledge. A mere company of merchants, influenced by the literary character, enlarges the stores of the imagination, and provides fresh materials for the history of human nature.

FRANKLIN, with that calm good sense which is freed from the passion of imagination, has himself declared this important truth relating to the literary character: "I have always thought that one man of tolerable abilities may work great changes and accomplish great affairs among mankind, if he first forms a good plan; and cutting off all amusements, or other employments that would divert his attention, makes the execution of that same plan his sole study and business." Fontenelle was of the same opinion, for he remarks, that "a single great man is sufficient to accomplish a change in the taste of his age." The life of GRANVILLE SHARP is a striking illustration of the solitary force of individual character.

It cannot be doubted that the great author, in the solitude of his study, has often created an epoch in the annals of mankind. A single man of genius arose in a barbarous period in Italy, who gave birth not only to Italian, but to European literature. Poet, orator, philosopher, geographer, historian, and antiquary, PETRARCH kindled a line of light through his native land, while a crowd of followers hailed their father-genius, who had stamped his character on the age. DESCARTES, it has been observed, accomplished a change in the taste of his age by the perspicacity and method for which he was indebted to his mathematical researches; and "models of metaphysical analysis and logical discussions" in the works of HUME and SMITH have had the same influence in the writings of our own time.

Even genius not of the same colossal size may aspire to add to the progressive mass of human improvement by its own single effort. When an author writes on a national subject, he awakens all the knowledge which slumbers in a nation, and calls around him, as it were, every man of talents; and though his own fame may be eclipsed by his successors, yet the emanation, the morning light, broke from his solitary study. Our naturalist RAY, though no man was more modest in his claims, delighted to tell a friend, that "Since the publication of his catalogue of Cambridge plants, many were prompted to botanical studies, and to herbalise in their walks in the fields." Johnson has observed, that "An emulation of study was raised by CHEKE and SMITH, to which even the present age perhaps owes many advantages, without remembering or knowing its benefactors. ROLLIN is only a compiler of history, and to the antiquary he is nothing! But races yet unborn will be enchanted by that excellent man, in whose works "the heart speaks to the heart," and whom Montesquieu called "The Bee of France." The BACONS, the NEWTONS, and the LEIBNITZES, were insulated by their own creative powers, and stood apart from the world, till the dispersers of knowledge became their interpreters to the people, opening a communication between two spots, which, though close to each other, were long separated—the closet and the world! The ADDISONS, the FONTENELLES, and the FEYJOOS, the first popular authors in their nations, who taught England, France, and Spain, to become a reading people, while their fugitive page imbues with intellectual sweetness every uncultivated mind, like the perfumed mould taken up by the Persian swimmer. "It was but a piece of common earth, but so delicate was its fragrance, that he who found it, in astonishment asked whether it were musk or amber. 'I am nothing but earth; but roses were planted in my soil, and their odorous virtues have deliciously penetrated through all my pores: I have retained the infusion of sweetness, otherwise I had been but a lump of earth!'"

I have said that authors produce their usefulness in privacy, and that their good is not of immediate application, and often unvalued by their own generation. On this occasion the name of EVELYN always occurs to me. This author supplied the public with nearly thirty works, at a time when taste and curiosity were not yet domiciliated in our country; his patriotism warmed beyond the eightieth year of his age, and in his dying hand he held another legacy for his nation. EVELYN conveys a pleasing idea of his own works and their design. He first taught his countrymen how to plant, then to build: and having taught them to be useful *without doors*, he then attempted to divert and occupy them *within doors*, by his treatises on chalcography, painting, medals, libraries. It was during the days of destruction and devastation both of woods and buildings, the civil wars of Charles the First, that a solitary author was projecting to make the nation delight in repairing their evil, by inspiring them with the love of agriculture and architecture. Whether his enthusiasm was introducing to us a taste for medals and prints, or intent on purifying the city from smoke and nuisances, and sweetening it by plantations of native plants, after having enriched our orchards and our gardens, placed summer-ices on our tables, and varied even the salads of our country; furnishing "a Gardener's Kalendar," which, as Cowley said, was to last as long "as months and years;" whether the philosopher of the Royal Society, or the lighter satirist of the toilet, or the fine moralist for active as well as contemplative life—in all these changes of a studious life, the better part of his history has not yet been told. While Britain retains

her awful situation among the nations of Europe, the "Sylva" of EVELYN will endure with her triumphant oaks. In the third edition of that work the heart of the patriot expands at its result; he tells Charles II. "how many millions of timber trees, besides infinite others, have been propagated and planted *at the instigation and by the sole direction of this work.*" It was an author in his studious retreat, who casting a prophetic eye on the age we live in, secured the late victories of our naval sovereignty. Inquire at the Admiralty how the fleets of Nelson have been constructed, and they can tell you that it was with the oaks which the genius of EVELYN planted *.

The same character existed in France, where DE SERRES, in 1599, composed a work on the cultivation of mulberry trees, in reference to the art of raising silk-worms. He taught his fellow-citizens to convert a leaf into silk, and silk to become the representative of gold. Our author encountered the hostility of the prejudices of his times, even from Sully, in giving his country one of her staple commodities; but I lately received a medal recently struck in honour of DE SERRES by the Agricultural Society of the Department of the Seine. We slowly commemorate the intellectual characters of our own country, and our men of genius are still defrauded of the debt we are daily incurring of their posthumous fame. Let monuments be raised, and let medals be struck! They are sparks of glory which might be scattered through the next age!

There is a singleness and unity in the pursuits of genius which is carried on through all ages, and will for ever connect the nations of the earth. THE IMMORTALITY OF THOUGHT EXISTS FOR MAN! The veracity of HERODOTUS, after more than two thousand years, is now receiving a fresh confirmation. The single and precious idea of genius, however obscure, is eventually disclosed; for original discoveries have often been the developments of former knowledge. The system of the circulation of the blood appears to have been obscurely conjectured by SERVETUS, who wanted experimental facts to support his hypothesis: VESALIUS had an imperfect perception of the right motion of the blood: CÆSALPINUS admits a circulation without comprehending its consequences; at length our HARVEY, by patient meditation and penetrating sagacity, removed the errors of his predecessors, and demonstrated the true system. Thus, too, HARTLEY expanded the hint of "the association of ideas" from LOCKE, and raised a system on what LOCKE had only used for an incidental illustration. The beautiful theory of vision by BERKELEY, was taken up by him just where LOCKE had dropped it; and as Professor Dugald Stewart describes, by following out his principles to their remoter consequences, BERKELEY brought out a doctrine which was as true as it seemed novel. LYDGATE'S "fall of Princes," says Mr. Campbell, "probably suggested to Lord SACKVILLE the idea of his 'Mirror for Magistrates.'" The Mirror for Magistrates again gave hints to SPENSER in allegory, and may also "have possibly suggested to SHAKESPEARE the idea of his historical plays." When indeed we find that that great original, HOGARTH, adopted the idea of his "Idle and Industrious Apprentice," from the old comedy of "Eastward Hoe," we easily conceive that some of the most original inventions of genius, whether the more profound or the more agreeable, may thus be tracked in the snow of time.

In the history of genius therefore there is no chronology, for to its votaries everything it has done is PRESENT—the earliest attempt stands connected with the most recent. This continuity of ideas characterises the human mind, and seems to yield an anticipation of its immortal nature.

There is a consanguinity in the characters of men of genius, and a genealogy may be traced among their races. Men of genius in their different classes, living at distinct periods, or in remote countries, seem to reappear under another name; and in this manner there exists in the literary character an eternal transmigration. In the great march of the human intellect the same individual spirit seems still occupying the same place, and is still carrying on, with the same powers, his great work through a line of centuries. It was on this principle that one great poet has recently hailed his brother as "The ARIOSTO of the North," and ARIOSTO as "The SCOTT of the South." And can we deny the real existence of the genealogy of genius? Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton! this is a single line of descent!

ARISTOTLE, HOBBES, and LOCKE, DESCARTES and NEWTON, approximate more than we imagine. The same chain of intellect which ARISTOTLE holds, through the intervals of time, is held by them; and links will only be added by their successors. The naturalists, PLINY, GESSNER, ALDROVANDUS, and BUFFON, derive differences in their characters, from the spirit of the times; but each only made an accession to the family estate, while he was the legitimate representative of the family of the naturalists. ARISTOPHANES, MOLIERE, and FOOTE, are brothers of the family of national wits: the wit of Aristophanes was a part of the common property, and Molière and

* Since this was first printed, the *Diary* of EVELYN has appeared; and although it could not add to his general character, yet I was not too sanguine in my anticipations of the diary of so perfect a literary character, who has shown how his studies were intermingled with the business of life.

Foote were Aristophanic. PLUTARCH, LA MOTHE LE VAYER, and BAYLE, alike busied in amassing the materials of human thought and human action, with the same vigorous and vagrant curiosity, must have had the same habits of life. If Plutarch were credulous, La Mothe le Vayer sceptical, and Bayle philosophical, all that can be said is, that though the heirs of the family may differ in their dispositions, no one will arraign the integrity of the lineal descent. VARRO did for the Romans what PAUSANIAS had done for the Greeks, and MONTFAUCON for the French, and CAMDEN for ourselves.

My learned and reflecting friend, whose original researches have enriched our national history, has this observation on the character of WICKLIFFE:—"To complete our idea of the importance of Wickliffe, it is only necessary to add, that as his writings made John Huss the reformer of Bohemia, so the writings of John Huss led Martin Luther to be the reformer of Germany; so extensive and so incalculable are the consequences which sometimes follow from human actions*."

* Turner's History of England, vol. ii. p. 432.

Our historian has accompanied this by giving the very feelings of Luther in early life on his first perusal of the works of John Huss: we see the spark of creation caught at the moment: a striking influence of the generation of character! Thus a father-spirit has many sons; and several of the great revolutions in the history of man have been carried on by that secret creation of minds visibly operating on human affairs. In the history of the human mind, he takes an imperfect view, who is confined to contemporary knowledge, as well as he who stops short with the Ancients. Those who do not carry researches through the genealogical lines of genius, mutilate their minds.

Such, then, is the influence of AUTHORS!—those "great lights of the world," by whom the torch of genius has been successively seized and perpetually transferred from hand to hand, in the fleeting scene. DESCARTES delivers it to NEWTON, BACON to LOCKE; and the continuity of human affairs, through the rapid generations of man, is maintained from age to age!

THE END.

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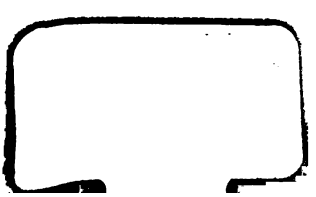
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